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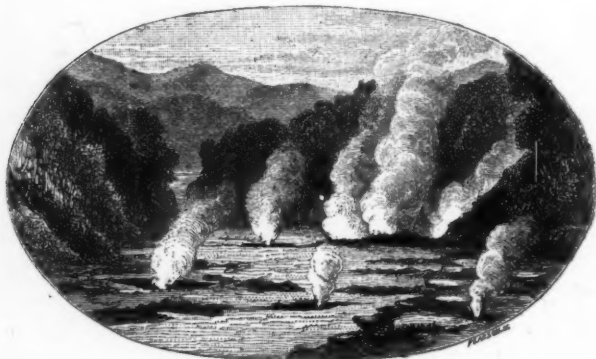
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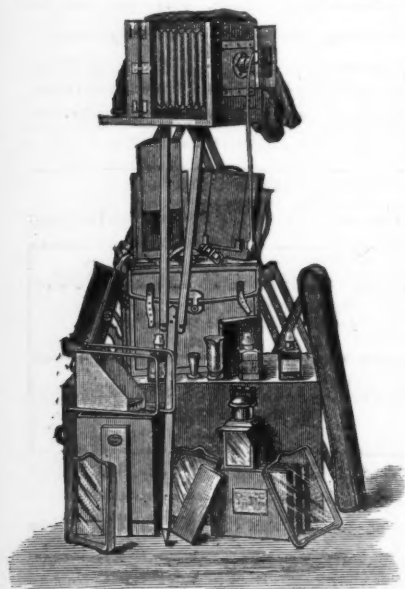
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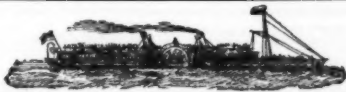
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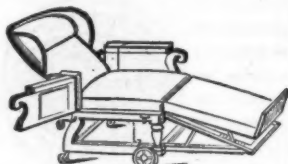
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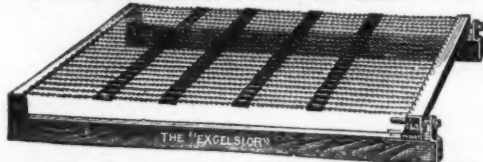
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# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JULY 1886.

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"BY a thorough knowledge of the natural laws which govern the operations of digestion and nutrition, and by a careful application of the fine properties of well-selected Cocoa, Mr. Epps has provided our breakfast-tables with a delicately-flavoured beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills. It is by the judicious use of such articles of diet that a

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Magnets manufactured and  
supplied by Jevons Bros.,  
166 Fleet Street, London,  
represent one of the most  
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E. B. Wood, Esq., L.R.C.P.,  
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writes:—'I cannot speak  
too highly of the Magnets,  
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plaints.'

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give off Natural Electricity,  
which acts directly on the  
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TO WEAR  
ON ANY  
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BY DAY OR  
NIGHT.

Read the Essay,  
'Electric Life, and  
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DISORDERS,  
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SLEEP,  
AND GENERAL  
DEBILITY.

Each Magnet is covered  
so as to be fr-tened by a  
stitch to the undercloth-  
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Belts, Knee-caps, Chest  
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and Bonnet Linings, (for  
Headache and Neural-  
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any kind of garment.

| No. | Size         | Wgt.  | Price |
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J. R. NEAVE & CO., FORDINGBRIDGE, ENGLAND.

# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

---

JULY 1886.

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## *Children of Gibeon.*

BY WALTER BESANT.

### BOOK II.

#### CHAPTER XII.

##### THE WOOING OF THE SPHYNX.

NO intelligence, letter, or news of any kind, was to come from her own people to Valentine during her Retreat. She was to be completely cut off; as much as if she had been expelled the family circle. A hard measure, yet Lady Mildred was a wise woman, and no doubt had her reasons. Valentine was to hear nothing, whatever happened. With the exception of one episode, very little, indeed, happened. Lady Mildred and Violet went to Ilfracombe, and presently Mr. Conyers made his appearance there. This was the single episode of interest. He stayed for three weeks; and he came, as was immediately apparent, with the intention of making himself, if possible, pleasing to Violet.

Ilfracombe in the season is an admirable place in which to study with thoughtfulness the character and the charms of a young lady, especially if she be not surrounded by other young ladies, and if she is permitted a certain amount of freedom, and if there are no other students of the same young lady about the place. In all these respects Mr. Conyers had the greatest possible advantages; he had the field to himself, and he was allowed every opportunity of carrying on this singularly attractive study.



He walked with Lady Mildred and Violet on the Capstone Rock ; he drove about the country with them ; and he accompanied Violet when she went sketching ; he was even permitted to go sailing with her. She had a boat of her own, and a boatman specially engaged for her own service. But there is generally a swell upon the ocean off Ilfracombe, and too often while Violet sat, rope in hand, bright of eye, and light of heart, when the white sail flew round the headlands, the young man beside her was fain to preserve silence, while his eyes assumed a fishy glare and his cheek was blanched.

‘I am watching them,’ wrote Lady Mildred ; ‘he may amuse Violet, but I am certain he will not touch her heart. To begin with, he is not exactly—well, there are gentlemen of many kinds, I suppose, and he knows how to conduct himself ; but he is not exactly a gentleman after our kind ; I do not hear anything about his people, but I suppose they are not distinguished, or we should have heard about them. He does not ride, or shoot, or hunt ; he does not know anybody, and I do not know where he comes from. He does not strike one as having lived with clever people, or well-bred people, or rich people ; and I daresay he is quite poor. If he is going to succeed in his work, it may help him a little to know people like ourselves. Perhaps, as you say, Bertha, he is in hopes of marrying an heiress. Let us give him every chance then.’

His best chance was when Violet went sketching, and he could carry her things and talk to her while she sat at work. He had learned from certain journals a patois criticism—every kind of patois is necessarily a debased form of the real language—and this he talked, borrowing the ideas, which are misty, of this school, as well as its tongue, and pretending that they were his own. It seems a great pity that Nature, when she created this man so ardently desirous of distinction, gave him no ideas of his own. What is genius without ideas ?

From talk of Art to talk of Love is a natural step. Love-making, indeed, may be made, in capable hands, a most artistic chapter of life, and one to be remembered ever afterwards with feelings of the liveliest satisfaction. It is most mortifying to think that most of us throw away and waste the most splendid chances while they are in our hands, hurrying the situation, scamping the dialogue, and simply ruining the ‘business.’ Some men, for instance, have actually been known to propose by letter ; while even of poets, who ought to know better, and dramatists,

and novelists, not to speak of painters, all of whom should be perpetually studying situation and getting the most business possible out of every tableau, there are few who have extracted from their own love passages anything like the amount of emotion, incident, and pathos which they should have yielded.

In this case Jack Conyers made no headway at all. It seemed as if the girl, in the most innocent way possible, purposely diverted every advance into another direction. All roads in conversation may lead up to love, but there are cross lanes at every other step into which one may turn. Violet willingly walked with him and talked with him, but she showed no sign of taking the least interest in him.

By this time he had completely satisfied himself that Lady Mildred would never have allowed her own daughter to live alone or among quite poor people in such a place as Hoxton. None of the ladies of his own family would have considered such an arrangement possible—there were ladies in his own family, though he never spoke of them, and did not invite them to his chambers in Piccadilly. Of course they knew, although they certainly did not belong to quite the very best circles, what was proper and what was improper. The Great Middle Class especially knows what is proper. It did not occur to Mr. Conyers as even possible that any young lady, much less a young lady who was the daughter of a baronet and the granddaughter of an earl, could dare to disregard those laws of propriety which are held as sacred as the Decalogue by the whole of *Bourgeoisie*.

He was so certain that he was going to risk his fate. He would make a determined effort. Somehow, although every morning he resolved upon proposing that very day, he never succeeded. He was constantly alone with the girl. Lady Mildred allowed her to go about as she pleased. He was in her boat, well off the coast with her; no one else but the old boatman within hearing; he was standing beside her while she sat and painted all the summer morning through; he was strolling with her over the cliffs to Lee, or inland, where the sea mists sweep up the narrow coombe; he sat with her on the Capstone Rock, while the waves rolled up against that great headland, and outside the harbour the pleasure-boats rolled and rocked and gave the people inside such exquisite pleasure that they all held their heads over the side and begged and prayed to be taken ashore instantly. And all the time he talked, and all the time he felt with a sinking heart that he was making no impression.

He made a last effort on the day before he came away.

'I must go back to town,' he said with a sigh. 'This has been a very pleasant holiday. I shall remember it all my life. But Work calls.'

'I thought yours was a kind of work which could wait till you chose to do it, Mr. Conyers. You have no work that you must do, have you?'

'Mine is Art work,' he replied reproachfully, because she ought to have understood. 'Of course, therefore, I wait until it calls me.'

'Oh! you wait for inspiration; and now it has come. That is why, all the time you have been down here, you have done nothing. I am only a feeble creature, but I must be always drawing. Well, and have you got your inspiration at last? And is it overwhelming?'

It seemed as if she was actually laughing at him.

'If I thought that anything concerning myself could interest you——'

'It does, Mr. Conyers. I am interested about all my friends. You are one of my friends, are you not? Besides, I am rather curious about you.'

'Are you really curious about me?'

'Yes. I want to know what you really can do. You see, Mr. Conyers, we have had a great many talks about Art, both in Florence and here; but I have never seen any of your work. Surely you have done something by this time. Claude tells me you used to draw very well at Cambridge.'

'I will show you some day. You understand that a man may not desire to let his immature work be seen. I will tell you, in my own studio, if you let me, something of my aims, perhaps.'

'As you please. But are they mysterious? If you are an artist, of course you propose to be a great artist. Claude is a lawyer, and desires to be a great lawyer.'

'My ambitions shall not be mysterious—to you.'

'Do not confide secrets to me, Mr. Conyers. I am the worst person in the world to keep them.'

'If you are curious—that is, interested—in anyone, you like to know everything about him, do you not?'

'You mean about his family connections?'

She was thinking of her own; but the question reminded him how awkward it might be if he should have to explain certain things, and how difficult it might be to put them so that they

should look really picturesque—almost everything may be made to look picturesque with proper handling, though the paternal profession and the ‘girls’ would require delicate handling when it came to explaining and introducing.

‘Fortunately, my own family connections are well known,’ said Violet lightly. ‘Claude and I come of an old family; on both sides, I believe, a family older than the Conquest.’

‘But you do not know—it is not certain——’

‘Well then, Mr. Conyers, we will leave it uncertain until October, and then, if you please, you shall show us some of your work, and explain some of your aims; though, if I were you, I should think less of the aims and more of the work.’

The most stupid man in the world could not fail to perceive that the subject must be deferred till after the coming of age. But he did something to show the disinterested nature of his passion—he went to Lady Mildred and begged for a few words with her.

‘It is, briefly, Lady Mildred,’ he said, ‘that I have ventured to fall in love with one of your daughters.’

‘You mean Violet?’ she asked coldly.

‘I have not presumed to speak to her. I do not know whether she regards me with any favour at all. But I have seen her every day here—thanks to your kindness.’

‘And you think you are in love with her?’

‘I ask only one thing, permission to take my chance; your permission to speak when you return to town. I have, I confess, but a slender fortune, though I have large ambitions. My future,’ he added, proudly, ‘is, I believe, in my own hands. It may be a distinguished future.’

‘Every woman desires a distinguished husband,’ said Lady Mildred. ‘But it would be a dreadful disappointment were promises not fulfilled, would it not? If you place any reliance on your genius, Mr. Conyers, it would be well to have some first-fruits ready. But indeed it is not genius that I desire for Violet so much as certain other qualities. You know the history of the two girls?’

‘One is the sister of my dear friend, Claude Monument. The other is your own daughter.’

‘One is an heiress and the other has nothing.’

‘Believe me, Lady Mildred, I should be happy indeed with Violet even in the latter case.’

‘That is well said’—it was fairly well said—but there wanted

what we call the true ring. 'That is well said; and now, Mr. Conyers, as you might be tempted to tell Violet all this at once, I beg you will go away, and if you are in the same mind in October, when we return, you have my full permission to speak to her.'

He went away, hardly satisfied; he returned to London. Town was quite empty, but Alicia was at home; there was always dinner for him—a good dinner—such as Alicia loved, with the beautiful claret, which she also loved, served in the great silver claret jug: dinner laid on the massive mahogany table, in the room with the huge sideboard and the pictures of game and fruit, all betokening a solid income and the substantial results of successful trading, with Alicia herself to talk about the old times before he set up for a fine gentleman and a great artist and a man of culture and sweetness, and was only a conceited handsome boy, who liked drawing girls' heads, and looked a good deal at his own face in the glass, and gave himself airs, and talked about himself to the girl five or six years older, who lived in the adjacent villa at Stockwell, and belonged to folk of like standing with himself. He liked this talking over the old times with her. She was a person of no imagination; she always laughed at his pretensions; she told him the whole truth; and she never swerved from the doctrine that there is but one thing in the world worth striving for, and that is the thing for which all good business people diligently strive—a solid income—all the rest being pure illusion.

For other distractions there was the girl at Hoxton. Something had come over this girl; a change in her manner and her talk; she had grown shy with him; the careless common talk of the streets, which formerly flowed freely from her lips, in a great measure disappeared—'it is the influence of my conversation,' he said. She was now dressed better; she had a newly trimmed hat, and a new frock, and new boots; and quite suddenly she began to fill out in figure and to improve; her face was no longer promising, it was really pretty; she had more than a pair of large and expressive eyes, and she carried herself uprightly. All this was the result of Valentine's dinners, Valentine's example, and Valentine's gifts. The girl was quick to learn; she was shy with this lover of hers because she understood that the situation was serious, and she was afraid of what was before her. Melenda declared that Valentine would soon go away and forget them. She also—her name should have been Cassandra—foretold the

approaching death of Lotty. Then the old life would begin again; but it would be worse—far worse—because she had now learned and knew what the easier life was like. Of course she ought not to have gone on meeting him; Valentine would be very angry if she knew; and yet the future that awaited her—and then—when it began—if this man should still want her to go away and become his Model, what should she say?

‘Mr. Conyers is gone, Violet dear,’ said Lady Mildred; ‘are you sorry?’

‘Rather. He amused us, did he not? I like talking to a downright affected man. Besides, I was pleased to watch his love for Beatrice. There is nobody he would so much like to marry as that young lady. He thinks he can deceive me into believing that he is in love with me.’

‘Violet!’

‘But he is a wretched actor. One sees through him every moment.’

‘My dear child!’

‘I wonder if he can really do anything. Claude says he used to draw. I dare say he has some talent. But when a man calls himself an artist, and for three whole weeks never touches a pencil, and goes out with one and looks on without offering to draw or paint anything at all—my dear mamma, I fear that Mr. Conyers is a humbug.’

‘He has asked permission to address you, Violet; I have given him that permission, but I have put it off until we return.’

‘Thank you, dear. I wonder where he comes from. He seems to know nobody. Well—I wonder what Valentine is doing now—poor Valentine! with Melenda! Mamma, I am quite, quite sure, that Beatrice—Mr. Conyers made a mistake when he gave you my name—will refuse that man.’

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### A USELESS CRIME.

LIFE is entirely made up of coincidences, though in novels, which should be pictures of real life, as much is generally made out of a coincidence as if the thing was unusual. That is because, although it is common, it is dramatic. One need not be surprised,



therefore, to hear that Valentine heard more about the man James Carey, and that from quite an unexpected quarter.

It was from none other than the old letter-writer, Mr. Lane.

Valentine met him one evening soon after she had received that confession at the Almshouse. He was creeping along the pavement on his way home, his shoulders were stooping, his head more bowed, his coat more ragged than when first she made his acquaintance. She stopped him and offered him her hand. He did not take it, but he made as if he would take off his hat. This habit, as has been already remarked, is an indestructible proof of good breeding. Another sign is the handling of the knife and fork. A third is the pronounciation of the English language. Mr. Lane did not carry out his intention of taking off his hat, because he remembered in time that the brim was like the maiden in the ditty, because at a touch it would yield. Yet the gesture moved Valentine with pity because it reminded her that the man had once been a gentleman. And how, by what cruelty or misconduct, had he fallen from the ranks ?

'May I walk with you ?' she asked. 'We are going the same way.'

They were in the Curtain Road, and it was on Saturday evening, when the furniture warehouses are all closed, and the German journeymen, if wicked report be true, are all locked up in their attics without coats, hats, or boots, so that they cannot get abroad until the Monday morning, and then they must go to work again, and cannot expect or ask to get out of doors until Saturday night.

The loneliness of Curtain Road on Saturday evening is as the desolation of Tadmor in the Desert, but the smell of varnish serves to connect the place with the handiwork of man.

'Surely,' replied Mr. Lane, 'surely. It is long since a young lady walked with me—very long. It is five-and-thirty years.'

She perceived that he walked feebly and that his knees trembled.

'I am going to take a cup of coffee, Mr. Lane. Will you take one with me ?'

'You wish to give me a cup of coffee.' He laughed a light, musical, but not a mirthful laugh. 'It is kind of you. I will accept it with pleasure.'

He had been down on his luck all day, as he presently told her in the coffee-house. Here she gave him a chop with his coffee, and thus afforded him an opportunity of displaying the little mannerisms with a knife and fork which characterise English



gentlemen all the world over. His luck had been very bad, it appeared, for many weeks, so that when the rent was paid there was not always enough to satisfy the wants of the machine. This evening especially he was much run down, and the unexpected chop brought a sense of physical comfort which he had not known for a great while.

'I thank you again,' he said, when he had finished. 'I am sunk low indeed, for I am not humiliated by the gift of a supper.'

'Do not speak of humiliation,' she replied; 'are we not friends and neighbours?'

'Neighbours certainly. By divine goodness. Friends?—hardly. Men like me have neighbours—the lower we sink the more neighbours we have. But friends?—no, we have no friends. Friendship begins much higher up. First comes the man who struggles and starves side by side with another in the mud; there is no end of his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches—for he gets none; he and his fellows touch each other as they search for food, like midges flying in a cloud beside the river; but these men are not friends. Then there are work-fellows on board the same ship and in the same workshop. They are companions, but not friends. And there are the men who are engaged in the same tricks. They call themselves pals, but they are not friends. Friendship, young lady, can only be formed at a certain stage of civilisation.'

'Oh! But there are such friendships as those of Lotty and Melenda and your daughter Lizzie.'

'The girls club together and fight against starvation. Call them friends if you please. But—' he paused and considered. 'There are some old lines in my head—

Love seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care.

Who can seek for anything but for himself when he is hungry? Starving people have no room for friendship or for natural affection. My daughter eats her bread and drinks her tea in one room—I eat my bread in another. She goes her way, and I do not ask—I have no right to ask—what way it is. Friends?—we have no friends.'

'The lines are Blake's,' said Valentine, somewhat astonished.

'Possibly. I have forgotten. Shall we go home?'

When they reached Ivy Lane, Valentine went with him unasked into his room.

'Will you tell me something about your dream?' she asked.

'About my dream? Oh! yes. About my dream. It is a dream which goes on continually. It has gone on for five-and-thirty years. My dream? It is my life. The rest is a vain show and shadow—a procession of days and hours which are possessed of mocking devils, except when you come to me. And even you are part of the show and seeming. That is not my life. No one would live such a life as that. You are a dream, and Ivy Lane is a dream, and Lizzie is a dream, and all the hunger and poverty and misery are part of a dream. But what you call my dream is my reality—my life. Stay—you do not know the beginning.'

'I shall guess the beginning, perhaps, if you tell me where you are at present.'

'They have offered the man in my dream a bishopric. It is unusual so soon after a deanery has been refused. He is to be the new Bishop of Winchester. It was always his ambition to be Bishop of the Diocese in which he was born, and where there is Portsmouth with the ships and sailors. His father, you know, was a sailor—middy at Copenhagen and Lieutenant at Trafalgar—so that he always loved sailors. One can understand how great an honour this invitation seems to him.'

'Will he accept it?'

'Surely—surely. It is a mark of the Divine Blessing on his life and labours. Besides, he who desireth the office of a bishop desireth a good work. This man has always looked forward to it as to the crown of his career; yet humbly, because it brings heavy responsibilities. The consecration will take place immediately. Meantime he meditates upon his duties. To-night he will meditate more deeply and with more spiritual advantage because I have eaten well. So closely united are soul and body.'

'The beginning, as I read it,' said Valentine, 'is that five-and-thirty years ago you were a clergyman?'

There was, indeed, something in the appearance and carriage of the man, in spite of his rags, which suggested the clerical calling. Impossible to say exactly what was the peculiarity, but it existed.

'I was once a clergyman,' he answered simply. 'I dream of my own life—as it might have been.'

'Please go on.'

'My eldest son—I was married thirty-five years ago—has just obtained a University Scholarship; my second is doing well

at Winchester—my old school; my daughters are sitting with me in my study; and my wife—but she is dead.’ A change came over the man’s face. Was his wife, then, not altogether a dream?

Valentine waited to hear more.

‘Five-and-thirty years ago,’ he said, ‘I was thirty, and I was married—not long married—when the dreadful thing happened to me. Good God! Why was it suffered to happen?’

‘Do not talk about it. Forget it if you can and go on with your Dream.’

‘I must talk about it. There come times when I am constrained to tell some one, even if it kills me to tell it. Last time I told it to the Doctor. He came here yesterday to see me, but he only talked about you.’ Valentine blushed. ‘He is in love with you. Of course he is in love with you. Everybody must be, you know that. It was not last night that I told him, but long ago—months ago—the last time that I was forced to tell it.’ His face was agitated and his fingers twisted nervously. ‘I must tell you.’

‘But it agitates and pains you. Do not tell me. Talk about your dream.’

‘No, no—sometimes I understand that my dream is only a dream, and the real life is here, among these rags; and then I must tell someone, even if it kills me.’

‘He came to the village and lodged there three months, at the village inn. We all got to know him. The Vicar at the Vicarage—that was myself—and Sir William at the House. He went about among us all, smooth-spoken and well-behaved; not a gentleman exactly, but a man who could sit with gentlemen. He came to church every Sunday; he played the violin beautifully, and I played the violoncello, and my wife the piano—it is not often that a good player comes to a village—and we had trios. I was married—yes, I had been married for six months. I should have been married before but for some college debts. I don’t think there was anybody in the world happier than I was all that summer.’

‘Hush! Do not excite yourself; tell the story quietly.’

‘Tell the story—tell *my* story quietly? Oh! you don’t know.’ His cheeks were white, his face was working, and his body writhing with the excitement of his story.

‘But you are right. The Doctor said I must keep quiet if I could. I will try. It was in the same summer that the great burglary took place at the House, and her ladyship’s jewels were

stolen. I have sometimes thought that, perhaps, James Carey did that too !'

'Who? What was the name?'

'James Carey was his name. James Carey.'

'James Carey!' Somehow she was not surprised. There could not have been two of that name—villains both. Yet it was strange to hear about him so soon again, and in this very house under the same roof with his daughter. What new villainy was she about to hear?

'When you have heard the story you will get up and go away.'

'No, no—I shall not.'

'It is a story of a great villain and a wretched sinner. There was a certain old debt, undischarged, which troubled me.' He told his story in jerks, stalking across the room, and throwing about his arms. 'The man threatened. I could pay him in three months, but he refused to wait. I was in dreadful trouble about it. The man Carey wormed himself into my confidence, and I told him. I was trustee, with another man, for a child. She had some money invested in our names. Carey showed me what to do. I ought not to have listened. I might have gone to that other man, my co-trustee; he would have lent me the money; but I was ashamed. Carey told me how to do it. Well, I was tempted, and I fell—a preacher of God's judgments—and I fell. I drew a cheque—it was for a hundred and twenty pounds. I signed it with my name; Carey signed my fellow-trustee's name—out of friendliness, he said. In this way, you see, I became a forger—yes, a wretched criminal—a forger. Why don't you get up and go away? I was to draw the money and to pay it back in six months' time; no one would ever know anything about it. He was the actual forger, but I was his accomplice—his equal in guilt. Oh! I have never complained of what followed. I deserve everything, and more. I do not complain, except sometimes, that men are made so weak. Nothing that has been done to me is equal to what I did to myself. I was such a fool, too—oh, I remember. When we had signed the cheque, Carey went to the bank to draw the money for me. Well,'—he stopped and laughed—'what do you think? He never came back—he never came back with the money.'

'Do you mean that he kept the money?'

'That is what he did. But I was a forger. Why, it was found out at once—I don't know how. My writing was well

known: experts swore that the forgery was by me, too. My desk was found full of imitations. Carey had put them there. They found out about the creditor and his threats. There was no defence possible except that another man had drawn the money. I do not complain; but sometimes I think he was a greater villain than myself. I was only a poor contemptible wretch, born for such a lot as this.'

'The man Carey,' said Valentine, 'is dead.'

'Is he dead? Is he dead?'—he spoke as if he was disappointed—'I cannot think that he is dead. Because for five-and-thirty years I have always thought to meet him face to face. Dead! And my own course is nearly run! Great Heavens! What a course!'

He gasped and laid his hand upon his heart. But the spasm passed.

'I have suffered penal servitude. I have been cut off from my fellows. All this I deserved. I have been disgraced and exiled and starved. I do not complain. But surely the other man should have had something!'

'He died in prison. He received a harder punishment than you.'

'He—died—in—prison.' There was consolation in the fact. 'I thought that I should die before him, so as to be ready with my testimony against him when he should come before the Judge.'

'Forgive him,' said Valentine. 'Forgive the dead, who can sin no more.'

"Their love and their hatred is now finished; neither have they a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." Thus saith the Book.'

'Then forgive him.'

'No; I cannot forgive him until the Day shall come when I can forgive myself. And that will be—never. Oh! men talk of forgiveness; but how can they ever forgive themselves?'

'Then do not speak of the man again. Tell me of your life since then. You found love. You have your daughter.'

'Love! Do you think in such depths as mine there is room for love? I found a miserable girl in the streets, a girl as wretched as my daughter is now; as poor, as starved, as hardly worked, more cruelly robbed. I married her. Why? I suppose to save her from a little of the pain. Oh! I did not ask if the other wife was dead; all that belonged to the past life, which was

gone. I married her; and perhaps she was less miserable for a while—I think she was—and then she died. I found money enough to pay some other poor wretches for the keep of the child. You know her—what she is. I have been able to do no more for her.'

'Poor man! Poor child!' Valentine took his hand—the long nervous hand, thin and bony as a skeleton's.

'She is the child of the gutter, which has been her playground as well as her cradle, and will be her grave. What can you expect? Has she any of a woman's virtues? I do not know. They are not wanted in the gutter. Let her live her life out with the other gutter children, and then lie down and die. Perhaps, after she is dead she will find out why any of us were born, and what it means.'

'Poor Lizzie!'

'Sometimes when the thing comes back to my memory—the prison cell—the coming out again, which was worse; the miserable life that I have led in this hiding-place—I feel as if I must ask why? But the heavens are silent. One cannot be heard up there, because of the crowd who are all crying out together and asking why?—poor wretches! You know, when Abraham communed with the Lord it was in the desert alone under the clear sky. It is no use crying out among so many. Else I could lift up my voice and ask why I was born so weak and others so strong.' Here his face became suddenly contorted and his eyes glared and his body bent double and his hands clenched, and he swayed from side to side as one who is wrestling with an unseen adversary. Valentine sprang to her feet, but she could do nothing. You cannot help a man in mortal agony.

The attack was over in a few moments. Presently he lay back upon the bed pale and exhausted.

'It was the Devil,' he whispered. 'He always clutches at my heart when I think about James Carey. I thought he would have killed me that time.'

'Do not talk. Lie quite still and quiet. Shall I bring the Doctor to you?'

'No, no; it is over now. Give me that bottle. The Doctor can do nothing.'

She sat by the bedside and administered such words of consolation as came into her mind.

Then he sat up on the bed and began to tell her more about his life, and how, after a long period of misery and starvation, he



found out the precarious way of earning his bread which he had practised ever since, and how the old life had vanished so completely that from the day when he was first put into prison he had never read a single book, nor looked in a single paper; and how, in the worst time of his trouble, his dream came to him and became a Ministering Angel; and he had found solace ever since in following an imaginary Career of honour and distinction.

A thick black line indeed had been drawn across his life.

‘What consolations,’ he asked, ‘can console for such a life as mine? There is the thought that sooner or later there will be an end of everything. “Surely,” said the Preacher, “surely oppression maketh a man mad, and better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof.”’

As for the other form of consolation, which sometimes does console, the poor man had lost the power of feeling it.

‘You must never again,’ said Valentine, ‘even think of this man. As he is dead you may the more readily forget him. And if you do not think of him too much, you may perhaps forgive him.’

‘Forgive him!’

‘As you hope for forgiveness yourself.’

‘I do not hope for anything.’

‘But he is dead.’

‘I do not know yet whether I shall meet him after death. Do not speak of forgiveness.’

He fell asleep presently. It was long past midnight when Valentine went upstairs to her own room. Lotty was lying asleep; her pains had left her for the moment; she was growing daily weaker; the moonlight was pouring into the room; from the neighbouring court there came the screams of an angry woman and the oaths of an angry man. Then these subsided and all was quiet. At one o’clock Valentine heard a step on the stair. It was Lizzie, the child of the gutter, come home from wandering about the streets. Valentine thought of her father’s words. Should she be suffered to lie for ever in the gutter? Had she any womanly virtues? Well, the girl had one virtue: she loved her friends.

Lizzie passed into her room and closed the door.

Then Valentine leaned out of the open window and thought of the great Human Questions—why we are born—why we suffer—why we perish—and looked into the Silent Heavens above. In the clear sky rode the Queen of Night in splendour; some of the stars were visible; she seemed to hear millions of voices around

her crying aloud in the night, all asking these questions, some with shrieks, and some with sighs, and some with wonder. And she longed for the peace of the desert when on such a night as that poor old man had reminded her, the Patriarch could step forth and commune with the Lord beneath the stars. Alas! the crowds of the great city would stifle such a commune at the very outset. Yet there are some—Valentine remembered—who find consolation in the faith that the heavens are not deaf as well as dumb. Else we had better all be dead, and let the great round world roll on for ever by itself without the mockery of man. And some day, we must also believe, all questions shall be answered, and on that day at length men shall learn even how to forgive themselves, and Shame and Remorse shall be no more.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### ASK ME NO MORE.

IVY LANE, including the part now called Ivy Street, and the courts leading out of it, is estimated to contain 1,200 people, which gives, if you compute by the square mile, a most preposterous rate of population. Most of the evils of life have taken up a permanent abode there, or are efficiently represented. Poverty, for instance, is always there, but that is too common to be regarded as an evil any more than a bald head or grey hair; most people either suffer from it perennially, or get it from time to time. Destitution is always somewhere in the lane, with empty shelves and pinched faces; Disease is always somewhere; Drunkenness, as soon as the evening shades prevail, doth still take up its wondrous tale; Repentance in the form of headache and heartache is never absent from Ivy Lane, because the people are always backsliding, and because, as the copybooks ought to enforce with greater emphasis, there is no overstepping which is not followed by its own headache; or, as another Book hath it—‘The way of transgressors is hard;’ Injustice is always outside Ivy Lane, oppressing the helpless; cheating and knavery, falsehood and treachery, craft and subtlety, everything is in Ivy Lane. Here is always the young man choosing between the Broad and the Narrow Way; between the Easy Way and the Rough Way; generally he chooses the Broad Way and so gets presently into difficulties. There is the young girl with such a choice as Lizzie’s always before her. There

are the old men and women who feel in a blind confused kind of way that they must have made some great blunder at some time or other else they would not now be so horribly poor. Love is always there, the Love of wife and sweetheart and mother; Love in all its forms, strong to save. New life is always there: every minute, or thereabouts, a child is born. And Death is always there: once a week at least the black box, generally a little one, is carried down the Lane.

This hive of swarming life, as soon as Valentine got over a few initial difficulties and grew accustomed to regard certain things without shrinking or terror, filled her with admiration mixed with humility. It shames us to witness the virtues of humble folk, because I suppose we are so perfectly certain that in our own case, supposing that we had ourselves to live in such a way, these virtues would be conspicuously absent. They are the humbler virtues, but useful and solid, such as Patience, Helpfulness, Cheerfulness, and Sympathy with other lives of little joy. By degrees Valentine got to know all the people. She talked with them in the streets, and sat with them in their rooms, and became, without difficulty and without money-giving, their friend. In every room there was a history. Thus, in one lay an old soldier, a Crimean veteran, full of stories, kept from starvation by a pension of ninepence a day, dying slowly of rheumatic gout, first engendered in the trenches before Sebastopol. There was the woman who washed, not as Mrs. Monument was wont to wash, with a lovely drying ground outside, but in her own room, hampered withal by a daughter of seventeen not quite right in her head—'half baked,' to use the popular and feeling expression. There was the decent man, laid up for the last four months with a bad knee, and all his savings gone. There was the painter who had always been in good work until his hand 'dropped'—a common misfortune in the trade when one grows elderly. There was the man whom rheumatism had seized by the fingers and the wrists, swelling his joints into huge lumps and twisting them out of shape so that he could not work. There were everywhere the women: here one down with a bad confinement; here one with a drunken husband who spent all the money in the 'Adelaide'; one whose husband was out of work; one whose husband had deserted her; and one whose husband was dead, and her children crying for the food which she could not give them. Another, an elderly single woman, gaunt and thin, proud and ashamed, held out against Valentine for a long time, with something of the decayed

gentlewoman in her speech and manners, and no doubt a history of her own if she chose to tell it, but she kept it to herself. As for her work—such a woman is not born for such work—she had to make trousers with the help of a machine for a delightful German Firm whose daughter, though only seventeen, was told off on account of her supernatural hardness, her shrewish temper, and her fluent tongue, to bargain with the women and beat them down to the uttermost and rail at them. But yet, by reason of the beneficial law of Elevenpence-ha'penny, and despite the amiable young German, even this poor thing earned enough to keep the machine going. And everywhere a doleful and monotonous spectacle, the women and girls who toil all day with feverish energy for their miserable wage. Everywhere the life that is not life; the same slavery; the same oppression; and the same patience.

Of course these people are full of sin and steeped in wickedness; everybody says so; they are fond of drink and prejudiced against church, and avid of any little enjoyment which falls in their way; they are stiff-necked; ungrateful and never satisfied—considering that whatever is done for them they are always left with the same long hours and the same short pay, it is not wonderful that they should be discontented. All of them moreover—a thing which must be considered—belong to the class which never get any share at all in the fruit and the wine, the cakes and the ale, however hard they work; nay, the harder they work, the less they seem to get. And there are others, beside Sam the Socialist, who are loudly asking the ominous question if this is right, that any workers, even working girls who cannot combine and never complain, and are perfectly helpless and cannot kick, rebel, or demonstrate, and are under no Law but the Law of Elevenpence-ha'penny, should always get less than their share.

‘You take it too much to heart, Valentine,’ said Claude.

They were sitting beside the pretty ornamental water in Victoria Park. It was half-past one o'clock, when the Victorians are all at dinner, and the Park was like the Garden of Eden, not only for its summer beauty, but because it contained only one single pair, a man and a woman. They had been talking over these things, and Valentine was betrayed into more emotion than was usual with her.

‘I cannot take it too much to heart. It is impossible.’ The tears crowded into her eyes, and her lips trembled. ‘I hoped,’ she added gently, but her tears rather than her words reproached him, ‘I hoped that you would have helped us, Claude.’

She was paler and thinner than when, six weeks before, she had begun her solitary life in Ivy Lane. Her face, always serious, was now set with a deeper earnestness, and there was no smile upon her lips. You have observed the first delicate beauty of a girl who knows nothing about the world and its wickedness, whose reading, as well as her companions, has been under supervision, who has been taught to believe in everybody's goodness, who has only just begun to go into society, and who is as yet perfectly heart-whole. Well, that was now gone.

In its place was the beauty of a girl who is young, still innocent, but no longer ignorant. Such knowledge as had come to Valentine does not destroy the early beauty, but it saddens the face and makes the eyes grave. She had learned hundreds of evil things; henceforth, things which had been mere phrases, prayers which had been meaningless, would possess for her their real and dreadful meaning.

There is nothing more saddening for a girl than the discovery that the world is not only very wicked, which the most carefully shielded girl must learn some time or other, but that its wickedness, in every form, is about her and around her, at her very feet, and that she is in a sense already responsible for some of it. This knowledge of evil came to Valentine suddenly, not bit by bit and gradually, as ladies sometimes learn it, but in an overpowering cataract which was almost more than she could bear. Perhaps it would have been better, it would certainly have been easier for her, had she been kept from the knowledge. The cultured life, surrounded by hedges which are filled with rosebushes, hawthorn, eglantine, honeysuckle, and wild flowers, on one side, but set with prickly pears and impenetrable thorns on the other, so as to exclude the rough and wicked world, is far more pleasant for a girl; most of us would keep our girls in this Paradise as long as we could; we think that because their frames are weaker and their limbs more delicate than our own, we ought to keep them even from knowing the wild forces and the ungoverned passions without, as if it was the body and not the soul that is threatened by those waves which break and those winds which roar. Yet Lady Mildred knew beforehand something of what Valentine would experience. She did not act without deliberation: we are all, she thought, men and women alike; it cannot be altogether bad for us to know the truth about ourselves and our brothers. Some of us still remember the old story of how the knowledge of good and the knowledge of evil go together; and there are hundreds of

women who all day long wade breast-high in moral sloughs and slums, and emerge unspotted, save that some of the sunshine is taken out of their faces, some of the light from their eyes, some of the smiles from their lips.

The tears in Valentine's eyes went straight to Claude's conscience like the stroke of a whip. This girl had not been his sister so long that he had ceased to regard her with a reverence which few brothers display towards their sisters. Besides, she was entrusted to his care; and, again, he had been thinking.

'I have not forgotten my promise, Valentine,' he said quickly; 'I remember all that you say to me. But it is a very serious subject.'

'You have really been thinking of us, Claude?'

'I have been reading as well as thinking. But, Valentine, as yet I feel powerless even to suggest anything.'

'But you will never let it drop—never. Oh! Claude, I see Melenda every day.'

'There is no doubt,' he began, 'that working women are treated absolutely in accordance with the principle so dear to employers—supply and demand. If that is a true principle, then I suppose they ought to have nothing to complain of.'

'Nothing to complain of!'

'Supply and demand means that the women have got to take the best terms they can get; in the struggle to live they undersell each other till they reach the lowest terms on which life can be supported. That is the whole case, Valentine. The employer gives the lowest wages which will be taken. There is no question of justice, or of kindness, or of mercy. They call it a law of political economy, which must be obeyed.'

'Is it also a law of political economy that men who employ the women are to get rich? Who makes such laws? I suppose the manufacturers. Let us make our own laws for the women, and the first law of all, that whether the employer gets his profit or not, the girls shall be properly paid.'

'We should then promptly lose the services of the employer.'

'Then we would do without him.'

'Women cannot combine like men. They are unaccustomed to act together. There are too many of them. And they have no public spirit.'

'I have heard all this before, Claude. But first set up all your difficulties, and then you can cut your way through them.'

'They could perhaps combine,' Claude went on, 'if they had



the support of the men. How to get that? How to make the working man feel that he must look after his sister?’

‘You will teach him that, Claude.’

‘You are persistent, Valentine. Every day your eyes look at me reproachfully——’

‘I do not mean to be reproachful.’

‘And yet you are reproachful. And every day the burden you would lay upon me grows heavier to look upon.’

‘Then take it up, Claude, and every day it will grow lighter.’

‘One must move the girls to act together; one must move the working man to act for his sister; and one must move the ladies, the gentlewomen, to act for the women who work. You demand impossibilities, Valentine.’

‘Only a man can move the women. You must speak to them, Claude. You must speak right out—from your very heart.’

‘It is strange,’ he went on, pursuing his own thoughts without answering her, ‘it is strange. The oppression of the working woman is no new thing. It has not been discovered yesterday or the day before. It has been preached and described over and over again. Never a year passes but someone writes indignantly about their treatment. It is fifty years since Hood’s “Song of the Shirt” was written, and forty since Mrs. Browning’s “Cry of the Children.” Well, the children have long since been released, and yet the women remain in their misery.’

‘That is because we care for the children,’ said Valentine, ‘but we do not care for each other.’

‘There are no women anywhere,’ Claude went on, ‘so charitable and so generous as Englishwomen; they are never tired of doing good things, they sacrifice themselves, they go about among the poor, they are nurses.’

‘But oh!’ Valentine interrupted him, ‘how many thousands are there like me, who have never done anything but look for new pleasures!’

‘There is a great literature upon the subject; the lines are written in blood, yet no man regardeth it. The story of the needlewoman of London is so terrible that one wonders why Crusades have not been preached. As for that, a Crusade has been preached, but nothing comes of it.’

‘It is because the preachers are women, and no one will listen to them. They want a man to preach, Claude; they want you.’

‘They want a stronger man than me.’

‘I can teach you what we women are like. I have studied

myself on purpose. We are soft and luxurious ; we like things to be smooth and pleasant ; we never ask how things come ; we think the world was made only for us to enjoy ; we hate to hear painful stories ; we put ugly things out of sight. You must force us to hear the whole truth : don't talk about our kind hearts ; lash us with the truth about our hardness till we cry for shame and repentance.'

She looked as if she herself could preach such a sermon on such a text.

'You are too bitter, Valentine.'

'We want a man,' she repeated, 'who must be young and generous ; he must be full of anger ; he must be able to speak, and fearless ; he must be a man who can speak to women of any class ; he should be a scholar ; he should know the working women well ; he should be bound to them, Claude, by more than the ordinary ties. Oh ! where can such a man be found unless it is yourself ? Claude, it is your sister Melenda who calls you out of her misery and her helplessness. Listen ! Oh ! you *must* hear her voice among them all—it is so full of rage and of madness. For what good were you taken from among them if—you—you of all men—spend your powers and your knowledge for your own ambition ? Oh ! Claude, if you could see the girls in their pain, too wretched even to pray'—she stopped because her voice broke down. 'Claude, forgive me. I will never trouble you again. You have your own ambition ; you have chosen your own way ; and all I can do is to stay among them and help one or two.'

She had conquered him before, when she made him help her in the Great Renunciation by her music. She conquered him now by her tears. He took her hand and inclined his head over it, saying, 'Take me, Valentine ; do with me what you please. I am altogether at your service.'

'Claude !' she dashed away her tears and sprang to her feet. 'You mean all that you say—exactly—all that you say ?'

'All, Valentine. Why, my honour is concerned ; it is my sister who calls me. Which of my sisters ? Is it Melenda, or is it Polly—which-is-Marla ?'

She caught his hands and held them with sparkling eyes.

'Only,' he said, 'do not expect too much. I told you at the beginning that you would be disappointed in me.'

'No, never disappointed ; always proud of our brother. And now, Claude, now—oh ! the women have never—never had such a chance before. You will feel for these poor girls as no one else

but yourself could feel for them. It is like taking one of themselves out of the dreadful work-rooms and giving her voice and speech and knowledge. Do you think that my mother—that Lady Mildred—meant this all along? Do you think she designed from the beginning that you were to give to the people the things she gave to you? Why, it was like a woman—was it not?—to give them through a man. But what did she intend for Polly?’ Certainly, she remembered in time, Polly showed, as yet, no signs of giving back anything to her own people. Valentine ceased, therefore, to pursue this speculation, which might have carried her farther than she wished. ‘Oh, happy girls!’ she went on, ‘they have found a Leader at last. You will speak for them, Claude, and write for them, and think for them. Oh, to be a man and to have a great cause to fight for! And you dared—oh! you poor boy, only a month ago—you dared to hesitate between your ambition and this wonderful Career that lies before you. Oh, it fills me with such joy! I cannot tell you how happy it makes me,’ yet she was crying. ‘I have been wretched because of my own helplessness. But now you are with me all the difficulties will vanish.’

‘As for me I feel that the difficulties are only just beginning. You will help me to face them.’

‘Yes; I will help you if I can. I did not understand at first, but now I do, that this is a work which will take all your soul and all your strength, Claude; all your time—perhaps all your life. Will you give so much to your poor sisters, who will take it all and perhaps never thank you? All your life, Claude? All your life—and never to regret or to look back?’

‘It is all I have to give, Valentine. I am prepared to give so much. Even to give up’—he blushed and laughed—‘even to give up the Woolsack, and never become Lord Chancellor.’

She did not comprehend—no woman could comprehend—the full extent of Claude’s sacrifice. Many young men are ardently desirous of distinction or even notoriety; they will stoop to Tom-fool tricks if they cannot get a show by any other way. Claude, on the other hand, was possessed of the idea that he ought to justify his social promotion. It seems, if you think of it, an extremely foolish thing for a young man to be picked out and raised above his fellows if he does nothing afterwards to justify the selection. One such case have I known. The man had everything in his favour; that is to say, he was, to begin with, the son of a village blacksmith, which is an enormous advantage at

the outset. You cannot get much nearer to the hard pan. Then he was a strong and lusty creature; and he was much impressed, like Claude, with the necessity for work. He did work; he worked day and night; yet, most unhappily. He was awkward and stupid, and could never acquire either knowledge or manners. He experienced as much difficulty in passing his examinations as if he had been the Son of a Duke; he entered a profession where brains are welcomed but are not necessary; and he has remained ever since in the lower branch of that profession on the wages of a blacksmith's assistant.

Consider: Claude had his fellowship; that is to say, a certain income for a few years longer; he could afford to wait; he had already some work, and could very fairly expect more; he could speak; he had studied Law with the same intensity which he threw into all his work; and he was calmly certain that he was going to do well. There is one excellent thing about a good degree, that it makes a young man believe in himself. He who has been well up in the First Class never afterwards doubts his own capacity to become Lord Chancellor, Archbishop of Canterbury, Editor of the *Times*, Poet Laureate, President of the College of Physicians, Prime Minister,—anything except Ambassador. That is the one distinction which shares with the Garter the pride of being kept absolutely out of anybody's reach. These First Class men do not generally aspire after the fame of Thackeray or Fielding, because, in Academic Groves, the craft of the novelist is held in contempt, and is not yet even recognised as one of the Fine Arts. They do not read Lucian, Apuleius, and Heliodorus. Claude therefore, who had been very near to the top, regarded any of these positions as a young athlete may regard an Alpine Peak. His foot may yet stand upon it. If now, at the very outset and beginning, he was to withdraw in order to work for Valentine, it would most likely be to destroy everything; and for what?

‘What will you give me, Valentine, in exchange for the Wool-sack?’

She was *exaltée* at the prospect which she saw before her, fair and glorious, because she was still very young, and because she believed greatly in this young man, who might have been, and thought he was, her brother.

‘Oh!’ she said, ‘you want nothing. It is a nobler life that you have chosen. It is a far greater thing even to try, and though you fail altogether; but you shall not fail, Claude; you shall not fail. I said that your sisters will take all that you give,

and never perhaps thank you. But I will take care that they shall. And in exchange you shall have the hearts of a hundred thousand women, whose lot you will change from wretchedness to plenty. Will not that be compensation enough for you?’

When history comes to ask—as no doubt it will—how it happened that so excellent a Lord Chancellor as Claude Monument was lost to the country, and why he never became Sir Claude Monument, and then Baron Monument, and then Earl of Hackney Marsh, I hope this chapter will be considered a sufficient reply. No one is to be blamed, except himself, and we must not blame him greatly, because he was like his forefather when the woman tempted him, and he fell.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### BROTHER JOE'S DISCOVERY.

CLAUDE'S conversion, or his awakening, or his act of crowning folly, whichever you please to call it, by which he absolutely abandoned and threw away as promising a career as ever offered itself to an ambitious young man, took place on the morning of Saturday, the twenty-ninth day of August.

The date is as important as other historical dates. It marks the commencement of a new era, as will be presently seen, and it has, therefore, to be remembered like that of the Hegira or that of Martin Luther's 'Theses.' It is also extremely important for another reason of a more private nature, and therefore, because all of us love the individual above the class, of more general interest. It is that on the very day after his conversion Claude learned a very important family secret. If he had known it on the Saturday morning his decision might possibly have been the same, but there would have been hesitations and difficulties.

He found out this important fact in a very simple way, so simple that he wondered afterwards why he had not thought of that way before. But then he had never set himself to discover a secret which Lady Mildred evidently regarded as her own, nor had he ever thought of ways by which that secret could be discovered. That kind of smallmindedness is impossible for a man whose chief desire it is to justify his promotion.

On the Sunday morning, being the day after the Great Surrender, he called upon his mother. This was not in itself by any

means an extraordinary event or one calling for observation. And his mother talked a great deal about her daughter, which was also not extraordinary, because during that summer the old lady thought and talked of little else, and occupied the whole time, during every one of Claude's visits, in a running commentary on the virtues of her daughter Polly. Claude, she thought, should consider his sister more; he should take her to tea sometimes, say at the Spaniards, or Jack Straw's Castle, or North End, or High Beech, or Chingford, or to some other country place of a Sunday; she would be all the better for country air, and she was too proud to keep company with the first that offered; as for thoughtfulness, and good temper, and singing like a bird, and never being cross, and catching a person up, or getting into rages, as Melenda did, there was nobody in the world like Polly, and what she should do when Polly went back to her place in October she did not know.

While they were still talking about her, it happened—again not an unusual thing on Sunday morning—that Joe came slowly down the road and looked in at the almshouse, and stood at the door, leaning and listening, pipe in mouth, slowly getting, in his own way, the utmost possible enjoyment out of a fine Sunday. He never said much at any time, chiefly because he was of an amiable disposition, and loved to oblige and gratify other people, and very well knew that people liked talking better than listening, and that everybody had a great deal to say on every subject. This morning he said nothing at all, but from time to time there passed over his face something broader than a smile, and something narrower than a grin. On Sundays he was newly shaven, so that the play of his lips had a chance, and his face, which during the week was always smudged, was now clean, so that his eyes had a chance. His lips, while his mother talked of Polly, smiled from time to time, and his eyes danced, if a man of Joe's age can have dancing eyes. Claude observed these signs of amused intelligence, and wondered what they might mean. Presently, and soon after stroke of noon, Joe got up to go, and Claude accompanied him. They walked away together, side by side, workman and gentleman, as it should be with all workmen and all gentlemen, as well as with those who are brothers. Outside the almshouses, Joe knocked the ashes from his pipe and laughed, not aloud, but with a chuckling, bubbling, secret enjoyment.

'What are you grinning at, Joe?' asked Claude, 'and what made you keep smiling while my mother talked?'



'She goes on about the gell, don't she, boy? Never tired o' singin' her praises—might make a man jealous, because there's my Rhoder been with her as many years as that one weeks.'

'She is very fond of her.'

'Well, I ain't jealous. Not a bit, Claude. I like to hear her. It does me good to hear her go on like that, the poor old woman! It makes her happy, don't it?'

'Why shouldn't she go on as you call it?'

'She and her Polly! Ho! ho! ho!'

'What do you mean, Joe?'

Joe stopped and looked at his brother in questioning guise.

'Why, you don't mean to tell me that you haven't found out?'

'Found out—what?'

'It don't matter to you and me; and if the old woman likes to think she's Polly, and if it makes 'em both happy, what's the odds to anybody?'

'Well, but, Joe—what can you know about it?'

Joe laughed.

'As if I shouldn't know my own sister di-reckly I set eyes upon her.'

'How should you know her when you haven't seen her for twenty years?'

'Brigadier, you're a scholar, and you've read a mighty lot of books. I haven't. But I'm blessed if I don't think I am as sharp in most things as you.'

'Sharper, if you please, Joe. I am sure you are, in fact. But go on, please.'

'Why—can't you guess now? Look here, Lootenant, it's this way. When father died—you've got no call to be ashamed of your father, mind—I was sixteen years old. Consequentially, I remember him, and his face too, very well, I do. You were only three or four. Consequentially you can't remember him nor his face. And he hasn't left his likeness behind. There's never a photograph of him anywheres. Now do you begin to see?'

Claude had not begun even yet to see. He had never somehow connected his father, who was the Shadow of a Name—but a blameless Name—with these two girls.

'When I see the two young ladies, pretty and sweet-mannered like the flowers in the Garden, and when I heard them going on in that pretty way of theirs about Valentine and Violet, and Miss Beatrice and Polly, and not knowing which was which, and the

old woman clutching hold of the one that wasn't Polly, and then the one that was, I could ha' laughed right out. But I didn't, Claude, I just let things be, and sat as grave as a judge.'

'Well, Joe?'

'Well? And didn't you see me call Rhoder and range her up alongside the two young ladies? What do you think I did that for? Why, for you to see as well as me, of course. I said to myself, "Claude's got eyes in his head. It's easy for him to see which of them two young ladies my gell favours." There she was—there was my Rhoder alongside the two who don't know which is which. Why, to me the likeness was just wonderful. It was most enough for a blind man to see.'

'Yet I saw nothing.'

'That was because you didn't think about anything but them two pretty creatures. Your head was full of 'em. As for my Rhoder, you hadn't a thought for her. Now look here, Claude, Rhoder's a very pretty gell—as pretty as most, and what's more to the point, she's just exactly like your father must ha' been when he was sixteen—as much as one sweet-pea is like another—though her grandfather couldn't exactly be called a sweet-pea. Cast your eye on Rhoder and you'll see your father over again. Then think of the two young ladies.'

Claude changed colour. He began to understand now.

'Get on a little faster, Joe—do get on. Tell me everything.'

'Father, you see,'—Joe did get on, but slowly—'he'd got a delicate kind of face, with what the women call speaking eyes, and a soft sort of a smiling mouth—oh! he was a good-looking chap; if you were old enough to remember what he was like, you wouldn't forget him in a hurry. Looked like a gentleman, he did. Well now, here's the long and the short of it. Rhoder has got the same eyes and the same delicate sort of a face, and the young lady she calls Polly hasn't.'

'Oh!'

'But the other one has. That very same identical face and eyes she's got. Same as my Rhoder. That's why I put her up alongside for you to see. And now do you understand?'

There was no longer any room for doubt on the point. The most stupid would have understood.

'Is it possible? Are you quite sure of what you say, Joe?'

'Certain sure I am. Lord! when I see that one coming back again without her fallals and pretending she was Polly come to

look after her mother, I could ha' laughed again. But I didn't laugh, Claude, because mother took it mighty serious.'

'Joe, she does not know. Valentine really does not know.'

'That's what I was in trouble about. I said, Either she's acting or she isn't. If she is acting, it's the best acting I ever see, and it would be a shame to spoil the fun; and if she isn't, she's a good girl, and it would be a shame to tell her when she thinks she's doing her best by her mother and Melenda.'

'This is no acting, Joe. Valentine does not know anything, and she must not be told.'

'Besides,' Joe continued, 'it isn't every young lady who would come and live as she's living. Not but what she's safe enough; and Melenda, though she's set her back up, wouldn't let anybody insult her but herself. I found that out first thing, Claude.'

'Did you, Joe?' Claude was much touched with this act of forethought. It really was a good thing for Joe to have done, if you come to think about it.

'Lady Mildred's daughter must not be let come to no harm,' Joe replied. 'If it hadn't been for her, where should we all be now? So, Claude, I had a word or two with Melenda. And she knows what to do.'

'Don't tell my mother, Joe. Let her find out when the time comes. Perhaps she may never find out.'

'I won't tell, boy. Don't be afraid of me, Captain.'

'And I say, Joe, don't be offended, you know, but I hope you haven't told Rhoda or—or anybody at home.'

'Tell Rhoder? Ho, ho! Claude, *do* you think I was born yesterday? You might as well tell the parish pump. I've told nobody except you. Me and you know—that's enough. Polly is the other one—the one who looked out of the corners of her eyes at me—thought I was going to knock her down, p'raps, or say something rude, or go swearing at the ladies; or to jump upon her, very likely; wondered if a working man was tame, and looked round the almshouses as if she was half ashamed and half curious and half amused. That one is your sister, Claude. That's Polly—which-is-Marla.'

Claude began to consider rapidly the situation and its possibilities. If Valentine knew this, or was to find it out, the whole reasons for her retreat from the world would be lost, and she might as well go back again. Then the brotherly relation with himself would be at an end; he could no longer go on

working with her in the same free and unrestrained manner. Why—he thought—what could be the reason for allowing Valentine to be under his care unless the maintenance of that brotherly sentiment, so that there should be no room for any other when the Discovery had to be made? It was wise and thoughtful of Lady Mildred, who was always wise and thoughtful. They were always to remain brother and sister. Very well, it was strange to feel that they never could be brother and sister. Meantime, in loyalty to his benefactor and friend, the situation must be accepted now at the cost of some deception and dissembling.

‘Is it possible?’ he said a second time.

‘As for this one,’ Joe went on, ‘that you call Valentine and mother calls Polly, she must be Miss Beatrice, I s’pose, and Lady Mildred’s daughter. But, bless you, she isn’t a bit proud. She sings about the place like a lark, and does up the tea-things, and dusts the room, and makes the old woman laugh, and fixes her easy and comfortable; and then she comes up to our place and sits down friendly and talks to the missus; and she’s as good as a mother to Rhoder—who’s afraid of her—and she buys things for the kids—boots and fruit and toys and things. She’s a topper, Claude. That’s what she is, and don’t let’s make no error about that. But you trust me. I won’t tell. As for letting anybody know—why—there—’

He filled his pipe again and began to feel for his box of matches.

‘You remember my father well?’ asked Claude.

Joe’s face changed curiously, and again Claude wondered. For this time it changed from sunshine to cloud, and his eyes darkened.

‘Yes,’ he replied shortly, ‘I remember him very well.’

‘It is curious,’ said Claude, ‘that I seem to know so little about him.’

‘Well, Claude, there isn’t much to know, perhaps. He’s dead. That’s about the sum of it. When a man’s dead, there isn’t much to say about him generally, is there? Once a man’s dead, you see—why—he’s dead, ain’t he?’

‘How was it he looked like a gentleman?’

‘Can’t say,’ Joe replied, ‘cause he never told me.’

‘A locksmith doesn’t often look like a gentleman.’

‘Well, I’m a plumber and a locksmith and a house decorator, and anything you please. And I suppose I don’t look very much like a gentleman, if you come to that. Unless it’s on Sunday

morning, when I've got on my Sunday trousers and in clean shirt sleeves, and I'm a-carrying home the beer for dinner, and then I feel a gentleman down to the ground. But you always look like one, Claude. There's no doubt about you. So did father, though not such an out-and-out Toff as you, Captain.'

'I should like to remember him.'

'Should you?' Joe replied, with a strange light in his eyes. 'Well, Claude, you've got no call to be ashamed of your father—remember that—though he was but a locksmith. Honest he was, and truthful—specially truthful. That's enough said about father. And don't you never talk to your mother about him, because she don't like it. Widows don't mostly, I suppose, like talkin' about their husbands. Seems natural, somehow.'

As a general proposition this maxim may be disputed, but in his own mother's case, Joe was right. Mrs. Monument did not like talking about her late husband.

(To be continued.)

## *Luck: its Laws and Limits.*

TO the student of science, accustomed to recognise the operation of law in all phenomena, even though the nature of the law and the manner of its operation may be unknown, there is something strange in the prevalent belief in luck. In the operations of nature and in the actions of men, in commercial transactions and in chance games, the great majority of men recognise the prevalence of something outside law—the good fortune or the bad fortune of men or of nations, the luckiness or unluckiness of special times and seasons—in fine (though they would hardly admit as much in words), the influence of something extranatural if not supernatural. For to the man of science, in his work as student of nature, the word ‘natural’ implies the action of law, and the occurrence of aught depending on what men mean by luck would be simply the occurrence of something supernatural. This is true alike of great things and of small; of matters having a certain dignity, real or apparent, and of matters which seem utterly contemptible. Napoleon announcing that a certain star (as he supposed) seen in full daylight was *his* star and indicated at the moment the ascendancy of his fortune, or William the Conqueror proclaiming, as he rose with hands full of earth from his accidental fall on the Sussex shore, that he was destined by fate to seize England, may not seem comparable with a gambler who says that he shall win because he is in the vein, or with a player at whist who rejoices that the cards he and his partner use are of a particular colour, or expects a change from bad to good luck because he has turned his chair round thrice; but one and all are alike absurd in the eyes of the student of science, who sees law, and not luck, in all things that happen. He knows that Napoleon’s imagined star was the planet Venus, bound to be where Napoleon and his officers saw it by laws which it had followed for past millions of years, and will doubtless follow for millions of years to come. He knows that William fell (if by accident at all) because of certain natural conditions affecting him physiologically (probably



he was excited and over anxious) and physically, not by any influence affecting him extra-naturally. But he sees equally well that the gambler's superstitions about 'the vein,' the 'maturity of the chances,' about luck and about change of luck, relate to matters which are not only subject to law, but may be dealt with by processes of calculation. He recognises even in men's belief in luck the action of law, and in the use which clever men like Napoleon and William have made of this false faith of men in luck, a natural result of cerebral development, of inherited qualities, and of the system of training which such credulous folk have passed through.

Let us consider, however, the general idea which most men have respecting what they call luck. We shall find that what they regard as affording clear evidence that there is such a thing as luck is in reality the result of law. Nay, they adopt such a combination of ideas about events which seem fortuitous that the kind of evidence they obtain must have been obtained, let events fall as they may.

Let us consider the ideas of men about luck in gambling, as typifying in small the ideas of nearly all men about luck in life.

In the first place, gamblers recognise some men as always lucky. I do not mean, of course, that they suppose some men always win, but that some men never have spells of bad luck. They are *always* 'in the vein,' to use the phraseology of gamblers like Steinmetz and others, who imagine that they have reduced their wild and wandering notions about luck into a science.

Next, gamblers recognise those who start on a gambling career with singular good luck, retaining that luck long enough to learn to trust in it confidently, and then losing it once for all, remaining thereafter constantly unlucky.

Thirdly, gamblers regard the great bulk of their community as men of varying luck—sometimes 'in the vein,' sometimes not—men who, if they are to be successful, must, according to the superstitions of the gambling world, be most careful to watch the progress of events. These, according to Steinmetz, the great authority on all such questions (probably because of the earnestness of his belief in gambling superstitions), may gamble or not, according as they are ready or not to obey the dictates of gambling prudence. When they are in the vein they should gamble steadily on; but so soon as 'the maturity of the chances' brings with it a change of luck they must withdraw. If they will not do this they are likely to join the crew of the unlucky.

Fourthly, there are those, according to the ideas of gamblers, who are pursued by constant ill-luck. They are never 'in the vein.' If they win during the first half of an evening, they lose more during the latter half. But usually they lose all the time.

Fifthly, gamblers recognise a class who, having begun unfortunately, have had a change of luck later, and have become members of the lucky fraternity. This change they usually ascribe to some action or event which, to the less brilliant imaginations of outsiders, would seem to have nothing whatever to do with the gambler's luck. For instance, the luck changed when the man married—his wife being a shrew; or because he took to wearing white waistcoats; or because so-and-so, who had been a sort of evil genius to the unlucky man, had gone abroad or died; or for some equally preposterous reason.

Then there are special classes of lucky or unlucky men, or special peculiarities of luck, believed in by individual gamblers, but not generally recognised. Thus there are some who believe that they are lucky on certain days of the week, and unlucky on certain other days. The skilful whist-player who, under the name 'Pembroke,' deploras the rise of the system of signals in whist play, believes that he is lucky for a spell of five years, unlucky for the next five years, and so on continually. Bulwer Lytton believed that he always lost at whist when a certain man was at the same table, or in the same room, or even in the same house. And there are other cases equally absurd.

Now, at the outset, it is to be remarked that, if any large number of persons set to work at any form of gambling—card play, racing, or whatever else it may be—their fortunes *must* be such, let the individual members of the company be whom they may, that they will be divisible into such sets as are indicated above. If the numbers are only large enough, not one of those classes, not even the special classes mentioned at the last, can fail to be represented.

Consider, for instance, the following simple illustrative case:—

Suppose a large number of persons—say, for instance, twenty millions—engage in some game depending wholly on chance, two persons taking part in each game, so that there are ten million contests. Now, it is obvious that, whether the chances in each contest are exactly equal or not, exactly ten millions of the twenty millions of persons will rise up winners and as many will rise up losers, the game being understood to be of such a kind that one player or the other must win. So far, then, as the results of that

first set of contests are concerned, there will be 10,000,000 persons who will consider themselves to be in luck.

Now, let the same twenty millions of persons engage a second time in the same two-handed game, the pairs of players being not the same as at the first encounter, but distributed as chance may direct. Again, there will be ten millions of winners and ten millions of losers. Also, if we consider the fortunes of the ten million winners on the first night, we see that, since the chance which each one of these has of being again a winner is equal to the chance he has of losing, *about* one half of the winning ten millions of the first night will be winners on the second night too. Nor shall we deduce a wrong general result if, for convenience, we say *exactly* one half; so long as we are dealing with very large numbers we know that this result must be near the truth, and in chance problems of this sort we require (and can expect) no more. On this assumption, there are at the end of the second contest five millions who have won in both encounters, and five millions who have won in the first and lost in the second. The other ten millions, who lost in the first encounter, may similarly be divided into five millions who lost also in the second, and as many who won in the second. Thus, at the end of the second encounter, there are five millions of players who deem themselves lucky, as they have won twice and not lost at all; as many who deem themselves unlucky, having lost in both encounters; while ten millions, or half the original number, have no reason to regard themselves as either lucky or unlucky, having won and lost in equal degree.

Extending our investigation to a third contest, we find that 2,500,000 will be confirmed in their opinion that they are very lucky, since they will have won in all three encounters; while as many will have lost in all three, and begin to regard themselves, and to be regarded by their fellow-gamblers, as hopelessly unlucky. Of the remaining fifteen millions of players, it will be found that 7,500,000 will have won twice and lost once, while as many will have lost twice and won once. (There will be 2,500,000 who won the first two games and lost the third, as many who lost the first two and won the third, as many who won the first, lost the second, and won the third, and so on through the six possible results for these fifteen millions who had mixed luck.) Half of the fifteen millions will deem themselves rather lucky, while the other half will deem themselves rather unlucky. None, of course, can have had even luck, since an odd number of games has been played.

Our 20,000,000 players enter on a fourth series of encounters. At its close there are found to be 1,250,000 very lucky players, who have won in all four encounters, and as many unlucky ones who have lost in all four. Of the 2,500,000 players who had won in three encounters, one half lose in the fourth; they had been deemed lucky, but now their luck has changed. So with the 2,500,000 who had been thus far unlucky, one half of them win on the fourth trial. We have then 1,250,000 winners of three games out of four, and 1,250,000 losers of three games out of four. Of the 7,500,000 who had won two and lost one, one-half, or 3,750,000, win another game, and must be added to the 1,250,000 just mentioned, making three million winners of three games out of four. The other half lose the fourth game, giving us 3,750,000 who have had equal fortunes thus far, winning two games and losing two. The other 7,500,000, who had lost two and won one, won the fourth game, and so give 3,750,000 more who have lost two games and won two, so that in all we have 7,500,000 who have had equal fortunes. The others lose at the fourth trial, and give us 3,500,000 to be added to the 1,250,000 already counted, who have lost thrice and won once only.

At the close, then, of the fourth encounter, we find a million and a quarter of players who have been constantly lucky, and as many who have been constantly unlucky. Five millions, having won three games out of four, consider themselves to have better luck than the average; while as many, having lost three games out of four, regard themselves as unlucky. Lastly, we have seven millions and a half who have won and lost in equal degree. These, it will be seen, constitute the largest part of our gambling community, though not equal to the other classes taken together. They are, in fact, three-eighths of the entire community.

So we might proceed to consider the twenty millions of gamblers after a fifth encounter, a sixth, and so on. Nor is there any difficulty in dealing with the matter in that way. But a sort of account must be kept in proceeding from the various classes considered in dealing with the fourth encounter to those resulting from the fifth, from these to those resulting from the sixth, and so on. And although the accounts thus requiring to be drawn up are easily dealt with, the little sums (in division by two, and in addition) would not present an appearance suited to a popular article. I therefore now proceed to consider only the results, or rather such of the results as bear most upon my subject.

After the fifth encounter there would be (on the assumption

of results being always exactly balanced, which is convenient, and quite near enough to the truth for our present purpose) 625,000 persons who would have won every game they had played, and as many who had lost every game. These would represent the persistently lucky and unlucky men of our gambling community. There would be 625,000 who, having won four times in succession, now lost, and as many who, having lost four times in succession, now won. These would be the examples of luck—good or bad—continued to a certain stage, and then changing. The balance of our 20,000,000, amounting to seventeen millions and a half, would have had varying degrees of luck, from those who had won four games (not the first four) and lost one, to those who had lost four games (not the first four) and won but a single game. The bulk of the seventeen millions and a half would include those who would have had no reason to regard themselves as either specially lucky or specially unlucky. But 1,250,000 of them would be regarded as examples of a change of luck, being 625,000 who had won the first three games and lost the remaining two, and as many who had lost the first three games and won the last two.

Thus, after the fifth game, there would be only 1,250,000 of those regarded (for the nonce) as persistently lucky or unlucky (as many of one class as of the other), while there would be twice as many who would be regarded by those who knew of their fortunes, and of course by themselves, as examples of change of luck, marked good or bad luck at starting, and then bad or good luck.

So the games would proceed, half of the persistently lucky up to a given game going out of that class at the next game to become examples of a change of luck, so that the number of the persistently lucky would rapidly diminish as the play continued. So would the number of the persistently unlucky continually diminish, half going out at each new encounter to join the ranks of those who had long been unlucky, but had at last experienced a change of fortunes.

After the twentieth game, if we suppose constant exact halving to take place as far as possible, and then to be followed by halving as near as possible, there would be about a score who had won every game of the twenty. No amount of reasoning would persuade these players, or those who had heard of their fortunes, that they were not exceedingly lucky persons—not in the sense of being lucky because they *had* won, but of being *likelier to win* at any time than any of those who had taken part in the twenty games. They themselves and their friends—ay, and



their enemies too—would conclude that they ‘*could* not lose.’ In like manner, the score or so who had not won a single game out of the twenty would be judged to be most unlucky persons, whom it would be madness to back in any matter of pure chance.

Yet—to pause for a moment on the case of these apparently most manifest examples of persistent luck—the result we have obtained has been to show that inevitably there must be in a given number of trials about a score of these cases of persistent luck, good or bad, and about two score of cases where both good and bad are counted together. We have shown that, without imagining any antecedent luckiness, good or bad, there *must* be what, to the players themselves, and to all who heard of or saw what had happened to them, would seem examples of the most marvellous luck. Supposing, as we have, that the game is one of pure chance, so that skill cannot influence it and cheating is wholly prevented, all betting men would be disposed to say, ‘These twenty are persons whose good luck can be depended on, we must certainly back them for the next game; and those other twenty are hopelessly unlucky, we may lay almost any odds against their winning.’

But it should hardly be necessary to say that that which *must* happen cannot be regarded as due to luck. There must be *some* set of twenty or so out of our twenty millions who will win every game of twenty; and the circumstance that this has befallen such and such persons no more means that they are lucky, and is no more a matter to be marvelled at, than the circumstance that one person drew the prize ticket out of twenty at a lottery would be marvellous, or signify that he would be always lucky in lottery drawing.

The question whether those twenty persons who had so far been persistently lucky would be better worth backing than the rest of the twenty millions, and especially than the other twenty who had persistently lost, would in reality be disposed of at the twenty-first trial in a very decisive way, for of the former score about half would lose, while of the latter score about half would win. Among a thousand persons who had backed the former set at odds there would be a heavy average of loss, and the like among a thousand persons who had laid against the latter set at odds.

It may be said this is assertion only. Experience shows that some men are lucky and others unlucky at games or other matters depending purely on chance, and it must be safer to back the former and to lay against the latter. The answer is that the matter has been tested over and over again by experience, with the result that, as *à priori* reasoning had shown, some men are



bound to be fortunate again and again in any great number of trials, but that these are no more likely to be fortunate on fresh trials than others, including those who have been most unfortunate. The success of the former shows only that they *have been*, not that they *are* lucky, while the failure of the others shows that they *have* failed, nothing more.

An objection will—about here—have vaguely presented itself to believers in luck, viz. that, according to the doctrine of the ‘maturity of the chances,’ which must apply to the fortunes of individuals as well as to the turn of events, one would rather expect the twenty who had been so persistently lucky to lose on the twenty-first trial, and the twenty who had lost so long to win at last in that event. Of course, if gambling superstitions might equally lead men to expect a change of luck and continuance of luck unchanged, one or other view might fairly be expected to be confirmed by events. And on a single trial one or other event—that is, a win or a loss—*must* come off, greatly to the gratification of believers in luck. In one case they could say, ‘I told you so, such luck as A’s was bound to pull him through again’; in the other, ‘I told you so, such luck was bound to change’; or if it were the loser of twenty trials who was in question, then, ‘I told you so, he was bound to win at last’; or, ‘I told you so, such an unlucky fellow was bound to lose.’ But unfortunately, though the believers in luck thus run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, though they are prepared to find any and every event confirming their notions about luck, yet when a score of trials or so are made, as in our supposed case of a twenty-first game, the chances are that they would be contradicted by the event. The twenty constant winners would not be more lucky than the twenty constant losers; but neither would they be less lucky. The chances are that about half would win and about half would lose. If one who really understands the laws of probability could be supposed foolish enough to wager money on either twenty, or on both, he would unquestionably regard the betting as perfectly even.

Let us return to the rest of our twenty millions of players, though we need by no means consider all the various classes into which they may be divided, for the number of these classes amounts, in fact, to more than a million.

The great bulk of the twenty millions would consist of players who had won about as many games as they had lost. The number who had won *exactly* as many games as they had lost would no longer form a large proportion of the total, though it would form

the largest individual class. There would be nearly 3,700,000 of these, while there would be about 3,400,000 who had won eleven and lost nine, and as many who had won nine and lost eleven; these two classes together would outnumber the winners of ten games exactly, in the proportion of 20 to 11 or thereabouts. Speaking generally, it may be said that about two-thirds of the community would consider they had had neither good luck nor bad, though their opinion would depend on temperament in part. For some men are more sensitive to losses than to gains, and are ready to speak of themselves as unlucky, when a careful examination of their varying fortunes shows that they have neither won nor lost on the whole, or have won rather more than they have lost. On the other hand, there are some who are more exhilarated by success than dashed by failure.

The number of those who, having begun with good luck, had eventually been so markedly unfortunate, would be considerable. It might be taken to include all who had won the first six games and lost all the rest, or who had won the first seven or the first eight, or any number up to, say, the first fourteen, losing thence to the end; and so estimated would amount to about 170, an equal number being first markedly unfortunate, and then constantly fortunate. But the number who had experienced a marked change of luck would be much greater if it were taken to include all who had won a large proportion of the first nine or ten games, and lost a large proportion of the remainder, or *vice versâ*. These two classes of players would be well represented.

Thus, then, we see that, setting enough persons playing at any game of pure chance, and assuming only that among any large number of players there will be about as many winners as losers, irrespective of luck, good or bad, all the five classes which gambling folk recognise and regard as proving the existence of luck, must inevitably make their appearance.

Even any special class which some believer in luck, who was more or less fanciful, imagined he had recognised among gambling folk, must inevitably appear among our twenty millions of illustrative players. For example, there would be about a score of players who would have won the first game, lost the second, won the third, and so on alternately to the end; and as many who had also won and lost alternate games, but had lost the first game; some forty, therefore, whose fortune it seemed to be to win only after they had lost and to lose only after they had won. Again, about twenty would win the first five games, lose the next five,

win the third five, and lose the last five; and about twenty more would lose the first five, win the next, lose the third five, and win the last five: about forty players, therefore, who seemed bound to win and lose always five games, and no more, in succession.

Again, if anyone had made a prediction that among the players of the twenty games there would be one who would win the first, then lose two, then win three, then lose four, then win five, and then lose the remaining five—and yet a sixth if the twenty-first game were played—that prophet would certainly be justified by the result. For about a score would be sure to have just such fortunes as he had indicated up to the twentieth game, and of these nine or ten would be (practically) sure to win the twenty-first game also.

We see, then, that all the different kinds of luck—good, bad, indifferent, or changing—which believers in luck recognise, are bound to appear when any considerable number of trials are made; and all the varied ideas which men have formed respecting fortune and her ways are bound to be confirmed.

It may be asked by some whether this is not proving that there is such a thing as luck instead of overthrowing the idea of luck. But such a question can only arise from a confusion of ideas as to what is meant by luck. If it be merely asserted that such and such men have been lucky or unlucky, no one need dispute the proposition; for among the millions of millions of millions of purely fortuitous events affecting the millions of persons now living, it could not but chance that the most remarkable combinations, sequences, alternations, and so forth, of events, lucky or unlucky, must have presented themselves in the careers of hundreds. Our illustrative case, artificial though it may seem, is in reality not merely an illustration of life and its chances, but may be regarded as legitimately demonstrating what must inevitably happen on the wider arena and amid the infinitely multiplied vicissitudes of life. But the belief in luck involves much more. The idea involved in it, if not openly expressed (usually expressed very freely), is that some men are lucky by nature, others unlucky, that such and such times and seasons are lucky or unlucky, that the progress of events may be modified by the lucky or unlucky influence of actions in no way relating to them; as, for instance, that success or failure at cards may be affected by the choice of a seat, or by turning round thrice in the seat. This form of belief in luck is not only akin to superstition, it *is* superstition. Like all superstition, it is mischievous. It is, indeed, the very essence

of the gambling spirit, a spirit so demoralising that it blinds men to the innate immorality of gambling. It is this belief in luck, as something which can be relied on, or propitiated, or influenced by such and such practices, which is shown, by reasoning and experience alike, to be entirely inconsistent not only with facts but with possibility.

But, oddly enough, the believers in luck show by the forms which their belief takes that in reality they have no faith in luck any more than men really have faith in superstitions which yet they allow to influence their conduct. A superstition is an idle dread, or an equally idle hope, not a real faith; and in like manner is it with luck. A man will tell you that at cards, for instance, he always has such and such luck; but if you say, 'Let us have a few games to see whether you will have your usual luck,' you will usually find him unwilling to let you apply the test. If you try it, and the result is unfavourable, he argues that such peculiarities of luck never do show themselves when submitted to test. On the other hand, if it so chances that on that particular occasion he has the kind of luck which he claims to have *always*, he expects you to accept the evidence as decisive. Yet the result means in reality only that certain events, the chances for and against which were probably pretty equally divided, has taken place.

So, if a gambler has the notion (which seems to the student of science to imply something little short of imbecility of mind) that turning round thrice in his chair will change the luck, he is by no means corrected of the superstition by finding the process fail on any particular occasion. But if the bad luck which has hitherto pursued him chances (which it is quite as likely to do as not) to be replaced by good or even by moderate luck, after the gambler has gone through the mystic process described, or some other equally absurd and irrelevant manœuvre, then the superstition is confirmed. Yet all the time there is no real faith in it. Such practices are like the absurd invocations of Indian 'medicine men'; there is a sort of vague hope that something good may come of them, no real faith in their efficacy.

The best proof of the utter absence of real faith in superstitions about luck, even among gambling men, the most superstitious of mankind, may be found in the incongruity of their two leading ideas. If there are two forms of expression more frequently than any others in the mouth of gambling men, they are those which relate to being in luck or out of luck on the one hand, and

to the idea that luck must change on the other. Professional gamblers, like Steinmetz and his kind, have become so satisfied that these ideas are sound, whatever else may be unsound, in regard to luck, that they have invented technical expressions to present these theories of theirs, failing utterly to notice that the ideas are inconsistent with each other, and cannot both be right—though both may be wrong, and are so.

A player is said to be 'in the vein' when he has for some time been fortunate. He should only go on playing, if he is wise, at such a time, and at such a time only should he be backed. Having been lucky he is likely, according to this notion, to continue lucky. But, on the other hand, the theory called 'the maturity of the chances' teaches that the luck cannot continue more than a certain time in one direction; when it has reached maturity in that direction it must change. Therefore, when a man has been 'in the vein' for a certain time (unfortunately no Steinmetz can say precisely how long), it is unsafe to back him, for he must be on the verge of a change of luck.

Of course the gambler is confirmed in his superstition, whichever event may befall in such cases. When he wins he applauds himself for following the luck, or for duly anticipating a change of luck, as the case may be; when he loses, he simply regrets his folly in not seeing that the luck must change, or in not standing by the winner.

And with regard to the idea that luck must change, and that in the long run events must run even, it is noteworthy how few gambling men recognise either, on the one hand, how inconsistent this idea is with their belief in luck which may be trusted (or, in their slang, may be safely backed), or, on the other hand, the real way in which luck 'comes even' after a sufficiently long run.

A man who has played long with success goes on because he regards himself as lucky. A man who has played long without success goes on because he considers that the luck is bound to change. The latter goes on with the idea that, if he only plays long enough, he must at least at some time or other recover his losses.

Now there can be no manner of doubt that if a man, possessed of sufficient means, goes on playing for a very long time, his gains and losses will eventually be very nearly equal; assuming always, of course, that he is not swindled—which, as we are dealing with gambling men, is perhaps a sufficiently bold assumption. Yet it by no means follows that, if he starts with considerable losses, he



will ever recover the sum he has thus had to part with, or that his losses may not be considerably increased. This sounds like a paradox; but in reality the real paradox lies in the opposite view.

This may be readily shown.

The idea to be controverted is this: that if a gambler plays long enough there must come a time when his gains and his losses are exactly balanced. Of course, if this were true, it would be a very strong argument against gambling; for what but loss of time can be the result of following a course which must inevitably lead you, if you go on long enough, to the place from which you started? But it is not true. If it were true, of course it involves the inference that, no matter when you enter on a course of gambling, you are bound after a certain time to find yourself where you were at *that* beginning. It follows that if (which is certainly possible) you lose considerably in the first few weeks or months of your gambling career, then, if you only play long enough, you must inevitably find yourself as great a loser, on the whole, as you were when you were thus in arrears through gambling losses; for your play may be quite as properly considered to have begun when those losses had just been incurred, as to have begun at any other time. Hence this idea that, in the long run, the luck must run even, involves the conclusion that, if you are a loser or a gainer in the beginning of your play, you must at some time or other be equally a gainer or loser. This is manifestly inconsistent with the idea that long-continued play will inevitably leave you neither a loser nor a gainer. If, starting from a certain point when you are a thousand pounds in arrears, you are certain some time or other, if you only play long enough, to have gained back that thousand pounds, it is obvious that you are equally certain some time or other (from that same starting-point) to be yet another thousand pounds in arrears. For there is no line of argument to prove you must regain it, which will not equally prove that some time or other you must be a loser by that same amount, over and above what you had already lost when beginning the games which were to put you right. If, then, you are to come straight, you must be able certainly to recover two thousand pounds, and by parity of reasoning four thousand; and again twice that; and so on *ad infinitum*: which is manifestly absurd.

The real fact is, that while the laws of probabilities do undoubtedly assure the gambler that his losses and gains will in the long run be nearly equal, the kind of equality thus approached is not an equality of actual amount, but of proportion. If two men



keep on tossing for sovereigns, it becomes more and more unlikely, the longer they toss, that the difference between them will fall short of any given sum. If they go on till they have tossed twenty million times, the odds are heavily in favour of one or the other being a loser of at least a thousand pounds. But the proportion of the amount won by one altogether, to the amount won altogether by the other, is almost certain to be very nearly a proportion of equality. Suppose, for example, that at the end of twenty millions of tossings one player is a winner of 1,000*l.*, then he must have won in all 10,000,500*l.*, the other having won in all 9,999,500*l.*; the ratio of these amounts is that of 100005 to 99995, or 20001 to 19999. This is very nearly the ratio of 10000 to 9999, or is scarcely distinguishable, practically, from actual equality. Now if these men had only tossed eight times for sovereigns, it might very well have happened that one would have won five or six times, while the other had only won thrice or twice. Yet with a ratio of 5 to 3, or 3 to 1, against the loser, he would actually be out of pocket only 2*l.* in one case and 4*l.* in the other; while in the other case, with a ratio of almost perfect equality, he would be the loser of a thousand pounds.

It should be known—though, perhaps, even this knowledge would not keep the moths away from the destruction to which they seem irresistibly lured—that gambling carried on long enough is not probable but certain ruin. There is no sum, however large, which is not certain to be absorbed at some time in the continuance of a sufficiently long series of trials, even at fair risks. Gamblers with moderate fortunes overlook this. In their idea, mistaken as it is, that luck must run even at last, they forget that, before that last to which they look has been reached, their last shilling may have gone. If they were content even to stay till—possibly—gain balanced loss, there would be some chance of escape. But what real gambler ever was content with such an aim as that? Luck must not only turn till loss has been recouped, but run on till great gains have been made. And no gambler was ever yet content to stay his hand when winning, or to give up when he began to lose again. The fatal faith in eventual good luck is the source of all bad luck; it is in itself the worst luck of all. Every gambler has this faith, and no gambler who holds to it is likely long to escape ruin.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

*The Letters written by a True Lover to his  
most honoured Mistress, in the year  
1646.*

I.

THEY say loving has gone out of fashion, sweetheart; then am I sure that neither you nor I can be in the fashion. For surely, if love be out of fashion, kissing must likewise be; and that that was a kiss you gave me when you took leave of me (and sad leave it was, sweetheart!) both my mouth and thine will testify. Your lips trembled, sweet, and the tears stood in your eyes, and yet I loved that gentle quivering better far than even the brightest smile you ever gave me, when first I saw you, sweetheart, ah, so long ago!

Do you remember that first time? You have blushed at it many times privately, I'll warrant, for there was neither shoe nor stocking on your foot. You were daintily fording a swollen brook when my horse neighed, and heigh, presto! your gown was dropped, and at sight of me the blood came surging up into your cheek.

Sweetheart, that was long ago!

Many a blush have you blushed, and many a tear have you shed (for the which I beg your pardon on my bended knees) for my sake, since then!

Now you have become the very soul of my soul. I tell you this, not because you do not know it well, but because it pleases me mightily to write it. Soul of my soul, I'll write it ten thousand times! with ten thousand new meanings each time. Janet, can you imagine, sweetheart, what pain 'twas to leave you, and what greater, sweeter pain to see you grieve at leaving me? I would not lose that greater pain for all the joys of heaven!

Sweet, I'm not blasphemous. I could not think of you and blaspheme; moreover, my dear and honoured chief would not allow a blasphemous man to fight in his great cause.

Janet, do you know the one rival you have? Now be jealous. I love a jealous woman.

Though jealousy is impossible 'twixt you and me, love such as ours closes the door on jealousy. You have divined your rival, sweet, without one word from me.

I always loved James Graham, Janet, and now that he has striven with all his might to raise an army to avenge the death of the most blessed martyr Charles, I love him so intensely that my pulses beat and my breath quickens at mere sound of his name.

Therefore I have unsheathed my good sword, which is keen even as I am to do battle in the cause. Therefore have I bidden you good-bye, my Janet, and am now sitting on an old drum in our camp, near Dumbath, penning these few lines which may be an everlasting farewell.

Janet, it is not a light thing to be a soldier's love; hard it is for you, sweet, and heavy to bear, that I know full well, but you are the bravest woman in the whole world, and did not flinch, though the tears stood in your eyes when you kissed me.

Forgive me, sweetheart, for referring to that kiss—perchance the last you may ever give me. Do you remember the horoscope cast for me? Sweet, if I am to die the bloody death foretold for me, I pray that it may be on the field of battle. I spoke to the noble Marquess concerning this, but he has a higher, purer faith than mine. He said that the manner of dying mattered but little, provided that we fell in a true cause.

It seems that he never doubts. I have doubted everything, save only Janet.

Montrose is a true lover. He and I spend many a night speaking about the ladies we love best. Perchance his lady resembles you, for you have much in common, inasmuch as you seem each to be the loveliest, truest, dearest of your sex. I do not tell my chief so, but I *know* my mistress is the more lovable of the two. Sweet, how many eyes have you? For, when I lay awake at night under heaven's canopy, each star looks at me with your eyes. I lay and talk to them, and tell them how I love you, and that I know you never will be mine. Sweetheart, the thought kills me. I am only as other men, and I long for you night and day. I try to pray that in days to come, when I lie under the sods, you will love some other man, and the very thought chokes me. Janet, you will never love another man! Dear, it is widowhood without ever a bridal I am condemning you to.

You will ask why these black thoughts and terrors. Alas! they are only too well founded. I am no coward, Janet, and do not dread to die, sword in hand, fighting to avenge the blood of my murdered king. But, Janet, Colonel Straughan is upon us with 12,000 men. If I could but die at the side of Montrose! . . . will you ever forget me, Janet?

Alas! that I ever met you. But no, that is heresy towards my sweet. I love you with the whole of my heart, dear, so farewell. I trust this letter to Duncan, who knows every pass and will bring these lines to you though the enemy guard every stone on the road.

If I were but Duncan to see your face again! My dearest heart, I send you something in the corner of this letter. Would that you could but give it back to me.

Yours until death,

JOHN SPOTTISWOODE.

P.S.—It seems I am not in the fashion, sweet, for I find I love you more than ever. A fig for the fashion, say I! My fashion of loving you is the best and truest part of me. Shall I lose that? Never. Even as I write I hear the call to arms. I fear you will learn the issue of this fight before you receive this. The little sprig of rosemary you plucked for me in happier times lies close to my heart; it speaks to me of you, but there was no need of rosemary for remembrance. If I could but forget you, dear heart, and you would but forget me, I should go to battle with a lighter spirit, but my love weighs me down, the sweetest burden that a man ever carried. Again, farewell, sweetheart!

## II.

Alas! for my foreboding spirit. Janet, have you heard of the disaster that has befallen us? Sweet, I trust that the news of our defeat has been broken to you gently. I could not rest all night after my capture for thinking of you, and how you would be able to bear the evils that have come upon us. In fancy have I seen your cheek pale and your lips quiver, have seen the glitter of your eye and the rush of tears that will have dimmed its brightness. I am costing you tears again, Janet! I, whose only joy 'twas to see you smile. And now, sweetheart, expect no quarter from our enemies. They are pitiless, nor do I care to accept pity

from any man. Your pity, Janet, half-sister to your love, I yearn for.

Dear, I dreamt of you the first night that I was a prisoner. Small wonder, you will think, that my night thoughts should resemble my day dreams. You were with me, Janet, and your fingers were playing with the locks of my hair, daintily lifting them from my hot forehead, and when I awoke 'twas but an icy blast that blew like chill despair through the open bars of my cell. Ah me! the sleeping and the waking! Think of the difference of the two!

Perhaps you still are ignorant of the manner in which we suffered defeat. I scarce can tell how you receive news from us. You seem so far away, Janet, but then 'twas always the same. When you had left my sight but a few minutes, it seemed as if I had passed into another colder, sunless world.

In as few words as I can, without useless preamble, will I narrate how it has chanced that we have fallen into so pitiful a position. Perchance you know that the Laird of Dumbath, an enemy of the most noble Marquess, left his castle garrisoned in charge of his lady and fled to Edinburgh. Our gallant friend, Colonel Harry, laid siege to it, and, though its position was naturally strong, took it after a short resistance. He left a sufficient garrison, and hurried to meet us who were advancing to the castle.

In my last letter I told you that there were rumours of Straughan's vicinity with a strong force. We were trying to gain a pass when the Marquess espied the enemy coming to meet us. Breathless as we were, from the trot at which we had advanced, we were fallen upon by Straughan's forlorn hope. The Colonel himself commanded another division. Colonel Ker yet another. It was short and bloody work, Janet. My men gave way at all sides. I lost sight of the most noble Marquess. Even our standard fell into the hands of the enemy. Sweet, it is bitter to be compelled to yield when the blood is on fire with the passion of fighting, when there is the death of a martyr to avenge! There seemed no bullet for me on that day. The death I sought eluded me. It is to be the scaffold after all, my Janet, and the seer who foretold my doom was in the right.

Fain would I have had it otherwise. Dear heart, I grieve over my dreams. Now that I am no longer free, I weary for a sight of the bonny heather, for a whiff of the fresh sea, for a sight of you, Janet. I tried not to write this last, because it is not only

weariness, it is too hopeless, too deep a yearning. I would die content could I but see your face once more, but that will never be. Dream visions of you will come to visit me; dreams remove bars and bolts; dreams scoff at prison walls. Janet glides in to comfort me, whether my jailers will or no. My dream Janet, pale reflection of a beautiful reality!

I cannot yet quite realise that I, who was (not so long ago) a happy lad, who had no care but the wish that his to-morrow should be as his to-day—who gloried in the sunshine and the blue of the sky—in the mountain air and the calm of the lake—am destined to die on the scaffold for allegiance to my king; that I, whose pride it was to fondle my Janet, should cry in vain for Janet to come and comfort me. All is lost now, sweet! My dearest Marquess, doomed of a surety to die; my country is torn by conflicts, my lands will fall in the hands of the Covenanters. I loved them well, those stretches of mountain and plain that I called mine. Ah! well, 'tis a little matter to lose them when I am bereft of all else. Janet, I think I hear you crying when you read this. Do not cry, sweet; for were you a thousand miles away your tears would rend my heart. It is not so great a loss to lose life when one has lost all else. Do not weep, my Janet, for this poor desperate lover of yours, who is penning this. He cares not greatly to live. To an exile, hunted down by pitiless foes, what would be the worth of life? Not worth a tear of yours, Janet!

And yet I love your tears. Sometimes, when I think of the feelings of a man who has no one to weep over him, I count those tears of yours, Janet, as the brightest gems I could possess.

Sweet, this will not be a farewell note, for my enemies will surely carry me to Edinburgh, where I shall meet my doom. If you could but tell the delight and the dread of writing to you. I am yet with you whilst I write, and the bare thought fills me with joy; and then a fear follows that these poor words of mine may fall in other hands but yours. I check the outpourings of my sore heart lest other eyes but yours should read them. 'My sacred love to be profaned by being laid open to scoffers' is a thought that fills me with dread. The ribald can find a jest in the holiest of matters and to have your sweet name made a byword by the careless would wound me keenly. But, of a surety, I shall find some means of sending a few words to you, and perhaps you may hear concerning me from my enemies, who make a loud boast that they have crushed and taken prisoner



Montrose and his army. Therefore, sweet, 'tis only farewell for a few days that I am writing now. Only, Janet, do not flatter yourself with false hopes. There will be no pardon for me. Nor do I desire one. Montrose doomed to die, I could not wish to live.

Heaven help me, if these words seem unloving to my sweetheart. But my life has proven so unlike my imaginings of it. My sweets have become bitter, my golden visions black realities; all my ends so different from my beginnings. I am too near my death to think of new possibilities. I can but go over the events of my life, and dream of my Janet!

Sweetheart, fare thee well, and grieve not mightily over

Your true lover,

J. S.

P.S.—The sun is shining brightly to-day, Janet, and I long for you with a consuming longing. A little gust of wind full of the fragrance of the heather has brought back to me memories of you. The glad days we spent together amongst the heather, sweet! It maddens me to think of them. How careless and happy we were, and how bonny you were! Janet, thoughts of joy, when the soul is overcast by sorrow, are like the tortures of hell!

### III.

Janet, in reviewing those graces in you that I loved, I had often been in doubt as to what manner of yours pleased me the best. I doubt no longer, for I know now that I loved your manner most when you braved bolts and bars and the tyranny of my enemies (whom I fully forgive, even as I pray the Lord may forgive me), and the churlishness of rude jailers, so that you could kiss me good-bye, sweet!

The joy of it! Janet, you cannot imagine what this glimpse of you has been to me.

Sure am I that there never breathed so proud a condemned felon, nor one with half such just reason to rejoice. Since Janet—her fears forgotten—came to me in my prison cell, what matter fetters or aught that my enemies can urge against me? If all that which their malice can invent be chronicled to my disparagement, no one will believe aught that is bad, since Janet kissed me!

When you entered my cell, perchance you observed that I was

tongue-tied, that no words could force their way to my lips, that my eyes seemed dazed and could not realise that it was my dearest mistress standing before me. You were so pale and wan, love, your pitiful face has haunted me ever since.

Sweet, I am to die; you know it! I swear to you that death has lost its bitterness since I have seen you. You cannot imagine how the thought that I never should see you more has pursued me. Night and day, since the disastrous day when we lost all, I have yearned for a glimpse of you, and yesterday you gave it me.

Sweetheart, who was to have been my wife, if it were not for you I should feel right glad that my short span of life is nearly over. Twenty-six years only have I lived, and have already seen the death of all I cared for.

My king has died a martyr's death on the scaffold, sold into the hands of his enemies by his subjects and countrymen—my countrymen. My poor country, torn by factions, distracted by conflict, could not even offer me a quiet and secure dwelling-place. You yourself, my Janet, would soon tire of a morose and unhappy husband. Perchance 'tis as well that our wedded life should be nothing but a golden dream, dreamt by us in happier times.

Janet, do not heed what I have written; 'tis but a poor pretence at consolation, a tissue of lies! To have called you wife, but for a day, would have amply compensated me for a life of anguish, and now I have grown mad—mad with the desire of seeing you again, of holding you once more in my arms; for, Janet, I am young and strong, and the hot blood is coursing through my veins, and to-morrow I die!

I fear no death, not even that on the scaffold, but I fear to carry about with me into the next world that great unassuaged desire, the desire for you, Janet. I cannot shake it off, it overpowers me. It will outlast life, nay, outlast death. Yea, on the very Judgment Day 'twill be you only that will bring peace to my tortured soul. Brave heart! you have suffered so much for me that I scarce like to lay another sufferance on you. 'Tis a great boon I crave of you—no need to urge you by telling you 'tis the last. I know you well, Janet, and, knowing you, scarce hesitate to crave this last favour, which, if it be not too great, I pray you grant me.

Janet, will you see me die?

Not in the midst of the crowd, sweet, but in some secluded spot, whence, when my last moment comes, you will murmur

through your tears, 'Dear soul! God give him rest. He loved me well!'

Loving you well is all that I could ever do for you, sweet, and how well I love you the very stars and seas (who know your name from hearing me repeat it) will testify.

I have heard a tale of two great French ladies whose lovers died on the scaffold, and who watched them die. Afterwards they embalmed the hearts of their true loves and carried them with them always for remembrance. No need of that for Janet! She will carry the remembrance of me securely in her own heart!

Sweet, if I have requested of you more than woman's strength can endure, refuse my boon. I shall go to my death bravely, never fear. Even if I think that you cannot grant me my desire, I shall die as befits my name and the Cause I fall in.

But if you are brave even unto the fulfilment of my wish, then stand at the window of the grey house, my cousin's house (which is filled to the brim, to me, of memories of you), and wave a kerchief as a signal to me as I pass. Then will I march to death gladly, even as a bridegroom goes to meet his bride.

To meet his bride! Oh! Janet, bride of my dreams only, would that I could pour out the bitter sweet words that come surging to my brain.

To tell you how I love you were impossible; to make you understand what you have been to me in sweetness and tenderness since the first day my eyes fell on you, equally impossible, and to bid you good-bye most impossible of the three. For though my pen cease writing, I shall not cease bidding you farewell until the axe severs my head from my body (if, indeed, I am favoured so much as to die by steel in lieu of rope, though it matters but little to me); even then a long 'good-bye' to Janet will be found on my lips by those who can read such language. Even now I have omitted to give you thanks for your sweet pleadings in my behalf. 'Twas great grief to think that you should thus humble yourself for my worthless life's sake; yet was it grief mingled with sweetness, for had you not braved all for me? And nothing can humiliate you, sweetheart; not even the churlish denial which the boon you craved met with from my enemy; but I thank you again for your courage. I love you for it; 'twas like you.

The little sprig of rosemary, Janet, still lies close to my heart. There will it lie until my heart beat no more; and then, when I am dead, methinks it must blossom out afresh from my grave. Was it not a love token from you? Can love such as ours, or its

emblems ever die? It must be everlasting. A little stir in my cell tells me that they are coming, to announce that I must soon make ready to die—that death will claim me from Janet.

If I but die as nobly as Montrose died, so that my dearest heart, in days to come (when she can bear to talk of it), will narrate, her voice thrilled with pain, and I hope a little pride, how her true lover met his death! You will be quite old then, Janet, your soft brown hair silvered, your eyes dimmed, your voice quavering, and I shall be everlastingly young, Janet, gone to my death in the fulness of my years. I wonder shall I have long to wait for you, Janet? Are you going to leave me lonely for long, my bride?

Oh! Janet, I must now write my last, last words to you. I feel that I have not lived my life quite in vain, since it has been given to me to gain your love. My whole being gives you unutterable thanks for the inestimable boon of your affection. You have sweetened my life, Janet, have even robbed death of its bitterness. And I love you with my whole heart, nor have I ever loved another maid but you.

I can scarce write the word 'farewell.' Methinks it should scorch the paper. See, sweetheart, I have kissed this just here. Lay your warm lips on the spot when mine are cold. Alas! that they should ever be irresponsive to yours.

Janet, there is scarce a moment now. I must e'en hasten to finish, so that this may reach you in time. I pray that you may get it.

There is no sadder thing than a farewell in all this sad world of ours. All earthly regrets are gone, save only my regret for Janet, and—— Good-bye, sweetheart. Fare thee well.

J. S.

The Lady Janet being troth-plighted to the young and gallant J. Spottiswoode, who was one of the noble Marquess of Montrose's most devoted followers, being in sore distress at news of her lover's imprisonment and sentence to death, herself craved the boon of his life from his enemies, which was, however, denied her.

By dint of courage and resolution she penetrated the walls of his prison, and came alone the night before his execution, to bid him good-bye. Her lover laid a wish upon her that she should witness his death, which wish she faithfully complied with.

As he passed her on his way to execution, he smiled right gladly with sudden joy, and she waved her kerchief to him, and

also threw him a white rose, which he prayed his guards let him gather up. But they, fearing that any delay would incense the populace against them (for all were weary of bloodshed), urged him on. At which he cried with a loud voice, 'Farewell, my Janet!' and walked firmly to the scaffold.

When all was over, the ladies surrounding the Lady Janet, who had seen her fall forward when her lover pronounced his last farewell, tried to lift her from the seat on the window on which she had sunk. But when they looked on her fair face they found that the Lord had been merciful to her, and had taken her to Himself when her lover breathed his last.

*Note.*<sup>1</sup>—I found this last notice, together with the three letters Spottiswoode wrote to his sweetheart, in an old oak chest which has remained unopened in our family for generations. I have modernised the spelling and the diction, but the letters still remain very much as they were written.

ALAN ADAIR.

<sup>1</sup> In order to prevent any possible misconception, it may be desirable to state that the above letters and narrative are entirely fictitious.—ED.

## *This Poor Man's Wife.*

### I.

OUT of work! You read it in every line of the man's face, in every glance he cast about him, in the very turn of his head and stoop of his shoulders as he moved slowly and aimlessly along. He was a slenderly-built, wiry-looking man of thirty-five or forty, with a thin face that was kindly-looking, no doubt, when times were not so bad, with keen blue eyes and ragged, drabbish hair about lips and brow. He walked slowly; now and then, at the corners of streets or where people were too busy to notice, he stood still and looked about him unexpectantly; then, as aimlessly as he had halted, he moved on again—his shoulders bent, his face hopeless, his steps dragging.

He turned out of the East India Road and down a narrower, less brightly-lighted street, towards home. At the bottom of the street stood two or three houses, taller and blacker than their fellows, with grey windows and grimy doorsteps. Before one of these he paused.

He did not enter at once. The thought of the disappointment he was bringing home with him again made a coward of his courage. His wife would hear his first footstep in the house, and would wait with eager eyes for the news which his face would tell her; he would see her greeting glance of hope, and see it go. He knew the tone in which, after a minute, she would say, 'No better luck, then?' sighing as she said it; he knew the dull, dead weight that would press upon him as she spoke. The home-coming was worse than all the day's weary wanderings to and fro. He waited. He leant against the wall, thrusting his hands down deep into his pockets, and glancing drearily up and down the ill-lit street.

Presently noisy footsteps descended the stairs and came through the passage. A woman came out.

'Ullo, 'Allet, that you?' she said, in a shrill, not unkindly voice, brushing against him, then stopping. 'Got a berth yet?'



'No,' said the man gloomily, 'nor like to get one. I've been on the tramp all day. Where's the good? There's hundreds off like me—hundreds wantin' every job that turns up. I've been off since Chris'mas—an' afore that I was off an' on, not earnin' much. I may be off till *next* Chris'mas fur all I see. I shouldn't care, but there's the little chap an' the missus——'

'She's up,' said the woman. 'I ran in to see her jus' now. She's no business to be up.'

'She's wantin' to be about again,' said the man, almost fiercely. 'She's wantin' to be at her needle. I can't earn, an' she feels she *must*—there's where it is.'

For a moment, as he spoke, his eyes were bright with tears; he drew his fingers roughly across them, and jerked his head back impatiently.

'I've seen the baby,' said the woman; 'he's a *bit* of a thing.'

'Yes, he's a *little* chap,' said the father. 'I'm going in. It's bitter cold. Good-night.'

He shut the door behind him, and groped his way through the dark passage and up the dark staircase. His room was at the top of the house; a line of pale, sickly candle-light showed that the door was just ajar.

Within the room, sitting at the table, with the candle drawn close to her, was Hallet's wife, Jinny, holding her young baby in her arms and trying at the same time to sew. She was a woman of twenty-five, with bright blue-grey eyes, and pale auburn hair with a little crisp ripple in it. Her face was thinner than it should have been; hard times were leaving lines of pain and sharpness about eyes and mouth; but Jinny was a pretty woman still, and there was an indescribable air of country healthiness and freshness about her, good to see. She looked up quickly as Hallet came in. His face answered the question her eyes asked. No work yet—no hope of work.

He sat down in silence. Jinny took no notice. Generally, after the first minute of disappointment, she would say briskly, with a tender little effort at cheeriness, 'You'm tired, Willyum—you'm tired, I reckon?'—to-night she had nothing to say. She pressed the child closely to her, and sewed fast, stopping every now and then as though the effort were painful, then sewing harder than ever again, as though the painful effort were in some way an outlet for painful thoughts.

William sat on the edge of the bed and watched her. Jinny was downhearted, he thought,

'How've you an' th' little chap been?' he said, with a laudable effort to seem cheerful and to cheer her.

'I've scarce given thought to how we've *been*,' said Jinny sharply, not looking up 'I've been workin', not thinkin'.'

There was a pause. 'You'm going the way to be bad, Jinny,' said the man, in a tone of timid expostulation.

She drew out her thread more quickly, and made no answer. William watched her again in silence. He was a little afraid of his wife, perhaps. He was not a masterful man, and Jinny was in every sense of the word 'the missus'—a woman born to be a despot, who would tyrannise always, always be adored by her loving subjects. Jinny would go her own way, he knew. Expostulation was useless; nevertheless, after a while, he gently expostulated again:—

'You'll be making th' little chap bad, too, if you get bad yerself,' he said.

No answer.

'You've no business to be *up*, leave alone at work,' he added.

'*Some* one must work,' said Jenny quickly; '*some* one must be earnin'.'

If she had been herself to-night she would have repented of the reproach at once, and have made up for it by sudden pleasantness. That was Jinny's way. She was quick of temper and quick of speech, and quick to forget her temper. She would slap a child vigorously and kiss it with tenderness, lavishing summary chastisement and unmerited forgiveness untroubled by thoughts of justice. She would scold William unsparingly and next moment smile at him. But to-night Jinny let her sharp words go, and was too miserable to care about their sting.

For the next ten minutes there was silence in the room. The man sat with his elbows on his knees, his clenched hands propping his chin, and looked drearily about the cold, almost empty room, with its bare floor and walls and empty grate. All their household treasures—the things they had saved up for and bought together and set such store on—were gone. Almost everything was sold that could be sold—Jinny's Sunday clothes and his own; the bit of carpet; the blue and red wool mat Jinny's brother had given her; the clock that had hung there on the wall, where there was a circle of clean whitewash now, like a white moon in a grey sky; the chest of drawers that had cost 2*l.* at a broker's in their flourishing days; Jinny's japanned tray; the pewter tea-pot

that had shone like silver—the room was desolate. His glance travelled all round, and rested on his wife, and on the ‘little chap’ who had come into the world in such sorry times.

Jinny worked with a sort of passionate energy, as though life depended on every stitch she took. William’s gentleness and solicitude irritated her unreasonably. Why did he sit there idle? He should get work—*she* was working.

Jinny was not quite responsible for her words to-night. She was weak and ill still. She had been taxing her small strength unduly; her nerves were all unstrung. She believed in William with all her soul; she knew as well as he that his failure in getting work was due to no slothfulness in the search, yet to-night, because she was suffering and because her motherly instinct made her impatient with hard times that would be hard for her child, there was relief in upbraiding William. She was miserable. She wanted to make him feel a little of this keen misery which she was feeling. He was too patient, too content. He *ought* to get work. She did not know *how*, but *somehow* he could get it. And he should get it.

She stopped working at length because the child moved and cried. William moved, too; then, looking tenderly at her:—

‘Don’t be down’arted, Jinny,’ he said, with a poor attempt at gaiety. ‘Where’s the good o’ being down?’

‘Down—who’s down?’ said Jinny sharply.

‘You’m down’arted as you can *be* to-night.’

‘Tis *time* to be down, seemin’ to me,’ said Jinny. ‘Time for *somebody* to be down. ’Twould be better, most like, if *other* folks was a little less easy an’ happy.’

‘You’m meanin’ *me* by that?’ said William.

‘You, if you like to take it so,’ said Jinny recklessly. ‘Some folks is easy by nature. I never heard that they come to much good. Work doesn’t come by whistling for it.’

‘You’m thinkin’ I won’t get the work.’

‘I’m not thinkin’ much about it. Where’s the good o’ thinkin’? *Some* men gets work. I’d see *myself* loafing about day after day——’

‘It’s pleasant, I reckon, loafing about with an empty stomach days like these,’ said the man bitterly.

‘I know *one* thing—I’d get work,’ said Jinny, irrelevantly but conclusively.

After that, for some time, there was silence in the room.

William got up slowly and went to the window, putting his hands in his pockets and whistling softly to himself. When his heart was heavy he always whistled; it was a way of assuring Jinny and himself of his lightheartedness.

Jinny was the first to break the silence. She had been bracing herself up to a sacrifice; but the sacrifice was a very bitter one, she could not make it graciously. There was no food in the house; she had fasted since morning, and so had William, and there was nothing wherewith to buy food. She looked down at her left hand which was holding her baby close to her tenderly. The tears came into her eyes; she brushed them away fiercely. She drew off the little gold band from her third finger, and put it on the table away from her.

'You can take it,' she said. 'When it's gone we can starve or come to the House. Take it—take it.'

William stopped whistling, caught up his green, battered old hat, and went towards the door. He left Jinny's ring where she had placed it on the table. 'Take it,' Jinny cried; but he did not heed. His footsteps sounded in the passage below, and the house door slammed noisily.

The room seemed colder when William was gone. Jinny tried to sew, but her fingers were numb; her strength had deserted her. She pushed the work away from her in despair. Then her baby began to cry again, and for a long while would not be comforted.

An hour passed. Two hours. Three. A lodger's clock downstairs struck ten. Jinny threw herself down on the bed, and waited and listened for William to return. She had fallen asleep, when at length there were footsteps on the landing outside, and someone tapped at the open door.

'Mrs. 'Allet, my dear,' said the woman in the doorway; 'may I come in, my dear?'

Jinny started and was wide awake in a moment. 'Come in,' she said. 'Oh, it's Mrs. Durby! Come in.'

It was a comfortable, portly old woman who entered. She and Jinny knew one another very well. They had lived for a year in the same house, and had struck up some sort of friendship on the strength of their west-country birth and scorn of London ways.

'I was asleep, I think,' said Jinny. ''Allet's gone out. I was thinkin' he'd been in afore now.'

The old woman sat down and looked sadly at Jinny. 'I've

brought 'ee bad news, my dear,' she said, pausing to see how Jinny would bear it. 'You mus'n' take on—there's others has been the same, better folks 'n you. It's—it's 'Allet. Don't 'ee upset yourself; don't 'ee now; but 'Allet, your man, he's—he's been took up. 'Twas a sovereign. They've took'n up fur it.'

## II.

The winter was over. The sky was blue, the sunshine was warm in the streets, and the breeze had the light, gentle touch of late springtime. Jinny sat up in bed this sunny afternoon, looking like a ghost of her old self. For a long while she had been ill; she was better now, beginning to wonder impatiently how she had lived all these weeks and to whom she was indebted. Old Mrs. Durby had brought her Monday's washing into Jinny's room, and was bending over a tub which was supported on two chairs, and talking, and rubbing, and wringing, all in the same comfortable, tranquil fashion, without haste or flurry. 'How had Jinny lived?' Well, the district visitor had been good, and the parish had let her have something, and one or two neighbours had been neighbourly. No need for Jinny to 'fash' herself.

'I never thought to come on the parish,' said Jinny regretfully; 'never! 'Allet might 'a' come on the parish; I never would.'

'Don't 'ee worrit yerself about that, my dear. Better folks'n you have come on the parish afore now. What you've got to do now is to cheer up afore your man's out again. His time's up to-morrow.'

Jinny's blue eyes were cold as steel. 'I minded that his time was up,' she said coldly. 'Better they'd keep un in prison. Stay in or come out it's all one to me.'

Mrs. Durby plunged her arms into her tub with more energy than usual. 'He's your man,' she said; 'you'm bound to stick to your man.'

'He's no man o' mine,' said Jinny frigidly. 'We've been honest folks—me an' mine—a'ways. No one could say other of us. An' no one *shall* say other. I'll fend fur myself; an' 'Allet, he can fend fur hisself.'

The old woman sighed. She had no sympathy with such unwifely sentiments. 'You'll drive yer man from bad to worse,' she said.

'He'll find the road easy,' said Jinny bitterly. 'Not much drivin' in't, I reckon.

The old woman sighed again. 'I was never one o' th' hard ones *myself*,' she said.

'Could anyone cast it agen you yer husband was a thief?' said Jinny fiercely.

'Aw no! My man was honest. I'll say that fur un,' said the old woman comfortably. 'If he hadn' been, I should 'a' stuck to un all same,' she added, after a moment.

Jinny lay back on the bed for some minutes without speaking. Then she raised herself on her elbow again, and looked strangely at her companion. 'I'll never forgive 'n,' she said slowly—'never. Maybe I ought. Some folks might. I'm differ'nt. I couldn' forgive 'n. I couldn' forget he'd been in jail. Folks said—that night—I'd drove 'n to do it. Drove un? Me? I'd rather 'a' starved—starved a thousan' times—than 'a' touched a penny come dishonest by. An' I drove 'n to it! Likely tale! I told un th' shop to go to, too, I s'pose; an' told the lady to drop her sovereign, an' 'ee to put his foot on un, and pick un up, an' walk off——?'

'Findin' 's keepin',' said the old woman apologetically. 'He didn' go to take it. 'Twas *work* he was askin' for. He was ready to work, an' to earn his wage like an' honest man. They was askin' in the shop window fur a boy. 'Allet wasn' a boy, but he was ready to work fur a boy's wage. Why couldn' they take un? They wouldn'. Then the money come in his way. He didn' go fur to take it. But findin' 's keepin'.'

'An' keepin' 's stealin',' said Jinny sternly.

The old woman wrung out the last garment in the tub, and drew out her arms and slowly wiped the soapsuds from them. She looked disapprovingly at Jinny the while.

'I wouldn' talk like that,' she said. 'Twas fur you he done it. That night, when he come home, he was down at fore door standin'. An' our 'Liza, she says she stopped a minute to speak to un. "Got a berth yet, 'Allet?" she says. "No," says he, "an' I shouldn' care—on'y, you see," says he, "there's the missus an' the little chap." That's what he says.'

Jinny laughed harshly. 'I've heard that tale afore,' she said. 'Twas *us* droved un to it! I'd 'a' forgiven un easier if they didn' bring that lie against us. Thought of *us*, did he? A brave lot he thought of us, little Tommy an' me, I reckon. When he's a grown man folks 'll be able to cast it up to Tommy.



"Father was in jail," they'll say. Done it fur Tommy an' me, did he?"

Jinny had tired herself out. For the next hour she lay still, resting. Old Mrs. Durby hung the clothes she had washed on a line across Jinny's room, and carried the tub downstairs. Jinny was left alone with Tommy.

Tommy was asleep. The sunshine, falling full on his little round red face, did not wake him. As his mother looked down on him her lips relaxed, and her eyes grew tender. 'Mother's lovely,' she said, softly, in sweet, west-country, caressing tones. 'No worrit to *mother*—never *will* be.'

There was a note of bitterness even in the tender, caressing tone in which she spoke to her child. Tommy had been 'a worrit' to his father—so the neighbours implied. They were anxious to excuse and defend William—there was the child, they said, and Hallet was 'soft' on the child. They were cruel to Tommy. They laid the responsibility of William's wrong-doing on Tommy and on herself. 'A man can't see his child and his missus starve,' they said. She and Tommy had been burdens. There was the sting.

It was late in the afternoon. Mrs. Durby's quiet but heavy footfall sounded on the stairs again.

'Mrs. 'Allet, my dear.'

'Yes,' said Jinny.

'There's the lady o' the district, my dear. It's a strange lady this afternoon. She's down below; she says she'll step up presently an' see you.'

Jinny looked indifferent.

'Shall I straighten th' bed a bit?'

'Where's th' odds?' said Jinny.

'She seems a starchy body. Not like th' one gen'ally comes.'

The stairs creaked again. A brisk, incisive step ascended and stopped at Jinny's door. Mrs. Durby ambled away, and the visitor entered.

She was a tall, thin, erect woman, with long neck and sloping shoulders, and a narrow smileless face. Grey bird-like eyes looked down, over a beak-like nose, at Jinny.

'Good afternoon,' she said, looking about her critically at the empty room and the line with the steaming, grey-hued linen, then back again at Jinny. 'You are the woman named Hallet, I think? My sister has spoken to me about you.'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Jinny, as her visitor paused and seemed to expect her to say something.

'My sister is unwell,' continued the lady in metallic, incisive tones. 'I cease to be surprised at her frequent indisposition after seeing the condition of some of the houses she visits. Do you never open your windows? My sister tells me you have been ill?'

Jinny was never one to pose as a sufferer before the class above her. There was a healthy, hardy independence about her which made her speak cheerily of herself. 'I'm gettin' round now,' she said. 'I shall pick up after a bit.'

'All this damp linen is not very good for you, I should think,' said the lady, loftily.

'It's Mrs. Durby's,' said Jinny. 'It's handier to hang it here—there's more room for it.'

The lady did not pursue the point.

'Is that your baby? How old is it? It is very small.'

'He's healthy,' said Jinny, shortly.

'And how many more are there?' said the lady without much show of interest.

'No more. He's my on'y one.'

'Ah—you must be thankful.'

'Thankful? Why? I could do wi' others like Tommy. He's no worrit—Tommy isn't.'

The lady looked around her again with calm, deliberate glance. Then she looked scrutinisingly at the wooden chair near Jinny's bed; and, having assured herself that it would not sully her garments, sat down.

'I hear that your husband is in prison?' she said.

'Yes,' said Jinny shortly. 'That's true.'

'It must be a great trouble to you?'

'I can bear it,' said Jinny grimly.

The colour came into her face; she put up her hand and pushed back the hair from her forehead with an impatient movement.

'Is this his first offence?'

'First and last,' said Jinny curtly.

'Yes, I hope, as you say, it may be his last. My sister has told me a good deal about you. She has been very much interested in your case. She has always, she says, found you honest and upright and trustworthy.'

'There's naught to praise one fur in *that*,' said Jinny. 'She's

same herself, I reckon. I never reckoned *that* anything out o' th' common.'

'An honest wife generally makes an honest husband. You must induce your husband to feel as you do.'

'I'm not one o' th' sort to preach,' said Jenny. 'Allet knows what's what—he don't want me to tell.'

'But what could have induced him to do this?' said the lady with the faintest possible little smile on her thin lips.

The smile, the superior tone, the air of calm, lofty remonstrance, were more than Jinny could bear. All Jinny's little world had excused her husband, been eloquent in apology for him; until now she had heard no word of censure pronounced upon him. The superior, questioning tone in which the lady visitor inquired, 'Is this his *first* offence?' and the accent of careless condemnation in which she wondered, 'What *could* have induced him?' came to Jinny like a new experience. She forgot her wrath with William. It was as though it had never been. Her only instinct was to defend 'her man.'

'What made un?' she said, scornfully. 'Wait till *you*'m out o' work, an' tries an' strives, an' begs an' prays, week in week out, month after month, an' have others lookin' to 'ee fur food an' house-room, an' can't earn enough to keep yerself, leave alone them belonging to 'ee. Maybe *then* you'd find it pretty easy to understand!'

The lady smiled slightly in a tolerant way. One cannot quarrel with one's inferiors. Jinny's ebullition of temper was unseemly, but dignity required that it should be overlooked.

'There has been great distress, no doubt,' she said. 'But yours has not been a solitary case. If your husband had reflected, he would have discovered that thousands were just as badly off as he.'

'Would that 'a' mended it?' said Jinny. 'That wouldn' 'a' given us food to eat. You wonder why he done it? There's no folks you'm soft on maybe, else you'd know. Maybe you'd do it yerself, most like, if there was folks you was soft on, an' you tried mornin', noon, an' night to earn an honest wage an' couldn'—maybe you'd do it, too—maybe you wouldn', though—maybe the other lady would. Maybe it wouldn' worrit you to see them belongin' to 'ee cold, an' bad, an' wantin'. You'm not the sort. 'Allet, my man, 's made differ'nt. He couldn' 'bide *us*, Tommy an' me, to be wantin' fur aught. There 'twas. We were worrits

to un. Thank God A'mighty, you'm not like to be any man's worrit an' lead un wrong——'

Jinny's voice had become more and more shrill. It followed the visitor down the stairs. Then Jinny was suddenly quiet.

Old Mrs. Durby ambled upstairs again by-and-by. Jinny was holding Tommy in her arms, kissing him, and crying gently. Her ring was gone from her finger. She held a little round screw of paper tightly in her hand. The old woman chatted comfortably for some minutes; then a pause came.

'Allet's out to-morrow,' said Jinny, breaking the pause.

'Yes. To-morrow. An' he'll get work now, th' chances are. They'm most of 'em on again.'

Another lengthy pause.

'There's nothin' in the house fur 'Allet,' said Jinny. 'I'd like un to feel cheerful comin' home. There's—there's this. You'll do it fur me? I've put it in the bit o' paper. They'll let you have somethin' on it. We can get it out again when 'Allet's in work an' I'm earnin'. I shall be earnin' soon. I'm pickin' up again. Will you take it?'

'It's yer ring, my dear—what you was wed with?'

'That's it,' said Jinny. 'But 'Allet, he's my man. I'd like un to find a bit of a meal, an' things a bit homelike.'

SHELDON CLARKE.

## *That Elm.*

IT was seventy years old: the unforgettable *three-score and ten*. It was the biggest and finest of three elms standing in front of a little Norman church (built indeed by a great architect in his day), of which the writer, living where he does, is glad to make much. The little belfry at the *quasi*-west end of that modest ecclesiastical edifice has stood unmoving aloft amid the waving branches for fifty years. And passing in front of the church in the time of green leaves, the long branches of the elm stretched for many a day over your head, and met those of another across the way, which grows just outside the chamber which was once the study of a great Scotch professor of Philosophy. We have admirable men left to us still in that little University: it would be better and healthier for all of them if they lived in a bigger place. But of late days we have been cut down severely. Far beyond this gray city, which indeed has but the population of a village, and is village-like in divers characteristics, some who read the English tongue know the names of Ferrier, Shairp, Tulloch. And those who bore the names are gone away. It made a great difference, to many, when each went. But there is no loss which is felt like the loss of something taken out of one's daily life: like the loss of one to whom you spoke naturally of the small interests and cares which make the habitude of daily being. And to this writer, the last-named of the three was worth divers good men.

He told me, more than once (we repeat traditions here to our friends from time to time), that when Ferrier worked and thought in that study with the elm rustling against its wall outside, he used continually to go to the window and look across at the little church; and often, on a summer afternoon when the windows were opened, he heard the sound of the congregation's worship as it went on, and found it soothing. Finally, when the venerable man who in those days ministered there entered upon his long

sermon, Ferrier listened to the voice going on and on : it was a sound without sense. Yet the philosopher declared that the sermon did him good : did him more good than any sermon preached within distinct hearing ; and indeed went on to declare that in his judgment it would be well that all sermons should be listened to in just such circumstances. Men who have in them a deep spring of humour are not to be taken as upon their oath ; and all hearers are not as Professor Ferrier was. Ferrier is gone, long ago. Now Tulloch has been taken too ; and this world, to many, is sorrowfully changed : is very appreciably poorer. And that whirling snow which I see falling as the daylight fails on this dismal afternoon midway in March, is falling upon his grave. He chid this writer, gently, once declaring that worn commonplaces, found of a sudden to be true by personal experience, are the only things that really reach the common heart of poor humanity. He declared the statement was Philistine. But ah, it is true.

Where fine trees are rare, one knows and prizes the individual tree as you do not in the vicinity of Richmond in Surrey. And to the writer, who through all his life has only managed to hold on without breaking down by making much of poor and little things, this appeared as indeed a beautiful elm. Walking under it continually, one knew all its aspects : the look of Winter, of Summer, of Spring. Here the winter is the longest-lasting season : five months at the least, from the beginning of November to the end of March, sometimes much more. And in that dismal season one barely manages to live : we do of a truth struggle through the winter. It is something, if one can but keep life from going out in that woful time of cold and darkness and tempest ; the world looks inconceivably dirty, black, and shabby. 'I think it's going to stop altogether,' a little boy long ago said to me. I related the fact to Tulloch, and Tulloch being a really great man was much interested, and several times recurred to that saying. Wherefore it is that the bare boughs, the wrinkled trunk, streaming with wet, rising from the dark earth, are what one best remembers : are what one used commonly to have. But very distinct in memory is the time when there came the green tips, and the little unfolding leaves. There were days of high and warm summer too : very few of them. But one has walked into church under foliage which was thick for this region of the earth. And above all, at a summer evening service, on one of the possibly two Sundays in the long year on which you might sing Bishop Walsham How's hymn *Summer suns are*



*glowing* without its looking absurd, through a stained window (not at all a costly one) I see clearly yet the branches gently waving in the soft breeze of July. For even here, in July and August it is sometimes warm. And then aging and beaten mortals may be said to live. In departed days when I was a country parson and dwelt in a region of magnificent trees, I am well aware I should have thought extremely little of this. But here, in these latter days, I have heard the tree called, with sincere feeling, by one not unentitled to be esteemed an expert in such matters, *A Grand Ellum*. For such, with some, is the local pronunciation.

But there came a stormy night, between December 11 and 12, 1883, and in the morning the beautiful elm was down. No human eye saw it fall. It had fallen precisely where its fall would do least harm: which is not the usual way of this world. But it had fallen, and it had to go. Just as close as might be to the roots, a slice was cut across the grain of the wood. Two years of seasoning, and the slice was deemed fit to be made into a table, which was carried into the room wherein the writer works, and set down where looking up from the page which is being covered he sees it continually. That is all which abides to him of the elm of eighteen years' acquaintance. And he trusts that this morsel of the dear old tree may meet his view on most days, until the time when some other elm may serve him in another way. For there are solemn associations about this particular timber. Let it be said that elmwood, even after long seasoning, is not quite so well fitted to be made into an article of furniture to be set in a room which is generally warm, as certain other kinds of material. More than once or twice, when one's mind was bent upon a page like this (let me tell the supercilious reader that to some souls it is very hard work to write, and very lonely work), a sudden loud crack has proceeded from that table; the elm's complaint at being carried into uncongenial surroundings. It was more comfortable, more at home, when it rose out of winter snow, and wrestled with the winter wind, than here, in a climate which suits its old friend better. Cracks are easily filled up: less easily treated was a tendency to warp, in a fashion inconsistent with the absolute level required. To the end that these evils be cured, that slice of the elm has meanwhile departed to where it was fashioned. Doubtless in due time it will return. Nobody is likely to mind much about it by and by. But for the information of anyone

whose eye may fall upon it, a brief history of the little table, fairly written out in the English tongue (as well as a Scotsman can write that language), has been affixed to the under surface of the precious slice.

I do not know whether the reader of these lines will conclude, from their tone, that they were written with a light heart, by one who had not very much to do. The conclusion would be in error. Very few of the innumerable pages which this hand has traced, have been written more heavily. But of course this is neither here nor there.

The reader, of course, knows *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*: I mean the book so called. If you do not know it, you are ignorant of some of the wisest, most humorous, and most touching prose that was ever written. Not but that there is poetry, too; and some of the verses there to be found are likely to abide. Do you know the poem entitled *The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay*? I am not about to refer to the general story set out therein, but only to quote certain lines always associated in my mind with That Elm.

Little of all we value here,  
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year,  
Without both feeling and looking queer.  
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,  
So far as I know, but a tree and a truth.  
This is a moral that runs at large:  
Take it—you're welcome—No extra charge.

Yes: the tree 'keeps its youth' in a fashion which to us human beings is rather awful. One has sometimes thought that as a dog's life is too short for human friendship, a tree's life is too long. The poor dog must go before us: the old tree's unchanged continuance is terrible to us so changed. It was not what Longfellow meant in lines which all the world knows; but many a one, going back to scenes long left behind, has thought, in another sense, of the *green trees* named by the poet. *Still they looked at me and smiled, As when I was a boy.* Smile is not now the word: it is wistfully the trees look at one. But assuredly, now that we are grey, the old trees look exactly as they did when we were children—no bigger, no older, unchanged. Well, there is change, too. Look where you cut your name deep in the bark, all those years ago. Gentle Nature, you see, regarded that laborious inscription as a wound; and year by year she has slowly

healed it. There is a scar left, as it is with a human heart which has *got over* what once seemed unendurable bereavement or disappointment: but no name of yours is legible there.

This elm was not appointed to see its hundredth year. It grew in an unkindly soil. Morally, the atmosphere of this place is balmy: we have soft zephyrs and azure skies. Morally, the soil is rich and deep. But physically the winds are chill upon many dreary days. And when you get through a foot or two of decent earth, you reach the sand which was laid down when the sea rolled over these parts. So the roots met no friendly welcome. They took no hold. They broke off, ineffectually. And a blast of the drear-nighted December made an end of the tree at a stage in its life when elsewhere it would have been in its youthful prime. Nor is the writer sure that any mortal but himself greatly cared. In this place, the writer has learned, unless in talk with two or three and no more, to keep his views on many matters wholly to himself; being well aware that he would meet with no sympathy whatsoever.

It was costly work to bring another tree, a sycamore, as big as seemed safe to transplant, and set it in the vacant place. So far, it lives and thrives. But the vacant place is not filled. There is a great blank: and the continual sense of something gone. It is as when a respectable dull man is put in the office from which a great genius was taken. Somebody goes: and it is a great trial. But somebody comes in and it is a far greater trial—a daily vexation—till you learn to be sorrowfully content. It is well, I suppose, that the duller the respectable man who comes into the empty place of the genius, the less likely is he to discern the contrast much remarked on by other men. The self-satisfied blockheads one has known! Would that the restraints of civilization were for a little space relaxed, that one might tell such what all men thought of them!

But in these latter days irritating reflections wear one, and they must be put away. Two things there are which have power to soothe: I am far from saying that they would soothe everybody. One is Nature: nature in all seasons and all aspects. The other is going to a weekday service. Such are the helps whereby one lives: the things which calm us, and keep us calm. The writer has no difficulty at all in understanding the awful inscription over Swift's grave. Fierce indignation at vile wrong-doing does tear the heart: but when the wrong-doing is beyond our mending, beyond our punishing, we try to think of something else.

A large part of the mental discipline of this age is (to some folk) the training themselves to think of something else. We take short views, not merely in respect of what the Future is bringing, but in regard of the environing horizon of spiritual surroundings. Sydney Smith said he managed to live by refusing, after dinner, to look on farther than to tea. And there are human souls that dare not look beyond their own quiet little corner of this world, and sometimes find what happens there too much for them: souls to whom the thought of what goes on in great London is a pure horror. I have named the two helps whereby divers ageing and anxious beings are sustained. The quiet solemn place: and here we are easily pleased, we are content with little: the beautiful hymns, the pathetic music, the marvellous prayers, the presentation to the mind of a certain order of thought which is not much present with us anywhere else: all these (as plain fact) help, lift up, turn the thoughts away from painful and morbid directions,—and it was Shakespere's wisdom and not Lear's wavering brain which dictated the awful *madness lies that way*. Some who may not much agree with the writer so far will be at one with him, naming the help of anodyne and alterative Nature. Even to-day, thinking somewhat bitterly of certain self-satisfied blockheads whom the reader never heard of, how it all went, vanished, like awful pain under some gracious opiate, at the sight of the deep snow lying white down to the sea-margin, and the cold green waves tumbling in, all under the failing light of the March afternoon. And this is the desolate winter on a bleak north-eastern coast. What of the green Summer, and the effulgent sunshine? What of scenery where every prospect pleases, and man is fairly decent too? I do not speak of the Alps: they are not within reach of most people one knows. But it is a matter of pence for the denizen of huge Glasgow to sail away down the lovely Frith of Clyde, and recreate his soul in that unutterable purity and beauty. Or get into a railway train at Callander on a bright August day. Go away up the Pass of Leny: it is a single line, and the trees brush the carriages as they follow the narrow track. Then through savage Glen Ogle: the desolation of the Weary Glen: come down by Dalmally on Loch Awe, and stop there. Look about you, and feel the genius of the place: take in the spirit of the season. You will be (spiritually) washed white: you will be calmed and cheered. If you go there a pettifogging dodger, you may possibly come away an honest man. Some I know might indeed have to stay a good while before this result,

which is much to be desired, could accrue. And then the inconvenience would arise, that nobody would recognise them. But Switzerland or the great Atlantic can do no more (for a simple soul) than can homely Perthshire or Argyleshire.

Not such, indeed, was the reflection which came to me this afternoon, looking at the white beach and the green sea, and thinking of the fallen elm. It was a theological dogma, once much pressed in this region of the earth, now seldom named, which suggested itself. Of all things under heaven, I thought of the doctrine of Election.

How capriciously things seem ordered! 'I should have been a very dull and humdrum person indeed, but that my grandfather married a clever Welshwoman. *That is Election.*' Such, precisely, were the words said to the present writer by one who, in his day, was (in the judgment of divers not incompetent souls) the greatest man in the great Church of England. *Dull and humdrum* were the words. And there was the eager, beautiful little face: and one knew how brave a spirit dwelt in that slight frame: how vivid a genius penetrated it to the fingers' ends. His worst enemy (and I have heard a human being call him a *pickpocket*) never called him dull. Yet he might have been; but for the arbitrary entrance into his nature of that fiery Cymric strain. No doubt in that case he would not have been the same man at all. I name him not. But I will go so far as to say that the Welshwoman's family name was Penrhyn.

I thought of this little slice of the tree arbitrarily taken, and the rest of it left. Here, in this warm room, the slice is likely to abide; while the remainder of the elm is in cold places out of doors, and some share of it even mouldering under the earth's surface. We cannot entirely reason from our own feelings to those of the elm: and it is extremely probable the elm does not care at all. Still, the fact remains. This little bit of the tree has been chosen to a fate widely different from that of the rest of it. It all grew together, through those seventy years. Now there has come a final severance. It is as when John was made Lord Chancellor, while those who grew up with him plodded through life in lowly ways. And the Election here is more arbitrary than in the case of John. John was elevated because some thought him fitter for elevation than other men. But the slice of the elm was not the best part of the tree. It suited the writer's purpose best. He who made the table pointed out that beautiful planks might be cut from the elm higher up:

whereas the slice cut across the grain close to the roots had two considerable holes of decay. It preserved, indeed, the contour of the trunk, and indicated its size. There was individuality in it. Planks would have had none. And of them you might have made a dinner-table.

Doubtless there is in this world very much of what seems quite arbitrary Election: nowhere more than in the capricious fashion in which some things remain in one's memory, while things of incomparably higher value are utterly forgot. It is a sorrowful confession to make. But the present writer, having on several occasions listened to a more than respectable preacher, cannot recal a word he uttered save the single sound *Attenmaritt*. By which he meant *at any rate*. Let it be confessed that phrases of irritating slang, intervening amid better sentences, stick like burrs. And indeed they are such. When Dr. Liddon (who is both beloved and revered by one who widely differs from him on lesser matters) talked in his sermon of *The Imitation*; it was nothing better than slang. The proper phrase is *The Imitation of Christ*. And to some the truncated title was extremely irritating. So when Mr. Disraeli stated that certain young ladies (whom Thackeray would have classed with much decision) 'after seventeen years of a delicious home *were presented*, and immediately married,' Mr. Disraeli expressed himself in most affected slang. And high-bred slang is the most offensive of all. But even so reprehensible was it when dear John Brown made the owner of *Rab* say of his little girl, 'She's *in the Kingdom* forty years and more.' Here, indeed, is a mode of expression one has heard many times used with deep earnestness and absolutely without affectation: and so it may pass. But it rubs one bitterly against the grain to hear someone say (generally in unnatural tones) 'Let us read *the Word*.' I have wished to beat such a one upon the head. The expression belongs to precisely the same family as the statement 'He has *had a glass*.' This is said of one who *sometimes tastes*. Let all who value pure English anathematise all such forms of speech.

There is another *Elm Tree*, known to letters as *That Elm* will never be. You remember Thomas Hood's eerie poem, written amid the grand elms which make stately avenues towards that eerie Ham House which stands by the Thames. Once upon a time I used to know them well: but that is long ago. The weird imagination of the humourist goes to that solemn use of the



timber of the elm of which most people know. He heard only a *sad and solemn sound* amid trees which I remember as sunshiny and cheerful. It was in a glowing June indeed, and the present writer was a youth. But to Hood, in that vein, the kindly and homely elm was a *mysterious tree: a mystic tree*. And he tells us it left its shadow upon his spirit.

A secret, vague, prophetic gloom,  
As though by certain mark,  
I knew the fore-appointed Tree,  
Within whose rugged bark  
This warm and living frame shall find  
Its narrow house and dark.

Strange, how the maker of puns and mover of laughter goes (not in this poem only, as all the world knows) to the opposite extreme of pathos, not to say of tragedy. It is the way with minds so made and strung as his. And you cannot read his *Life*, nor look at a picture drawn by himself near its close, without discovering that bodily ill-health had turned morbid, sometimes, the imagination of that true and gentle genius. Homelier souls are delivered from such trials. And to the writer, thus recording what he knew of its history, only pleasant and gentle memories gather around *That Elm*.

A. K. H. B.

## *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

THE parentage, childhood, and later surroundings of a genius must always be matters of interest; but in the case of Dr. Holmes they are essential to a true appreciation of his position among American men of letters. They imparted to his works their characteristic flavour; they explain the eagerness with which he has been adopted in the Old World; they prove how premature and unreasonable was the demand, made half a century ago, that Transatlantic literature should be unlike anything previously produced—a nondescript monster, wild, shaggy, and untamed as a buffalo.

Dr. Holmes was born at Cambridge, U.S., in 1809.

Know old Cambridge? Hope you do.  
Born there? Don't say so! I was too;  
Born in a house with a gambrel roof—  
Standing still, if you must have proof.  
(‘Gambrel! gambrel!’ Let me beg  
You'll look at a horse's hinder leg—  
First great angle above the hoof,  
That's the gambrel; hence gambrel roof.)

‘Elsie Venner’ and ‘The Guardian Angel’ were both written by Dr. Holmes to illustrate the limits set to human responsibility by inherited tendencies. He compares the body in which we traverse the isthmus of life not to a private carriage, but to a public omnibus filled inside and out with our ancestors. His theory gives special importance to his parentage. On the paternal side he inherits blood

such as warmed the pilgrim sons of toil  
Who held from God the charter of the soil.

His father was a clergyman of Calvinistic but liberal views, a scholar and an antiquarian. Through his mother his ancestors were Dutch. He writes to Wendell Phillips, the Abolitionist—

Both Grotius and Erasmus were countrymen of we,  
And Vondel was our namesake, though he spelt it with a V,

He claims kinship with Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, the first American poetess, the daughter of one and the wife of another of the early governors of Massachusetts, and also with 'Dorothy Q.,' whose picture inspired one of his best-known poems. Among the inside passengers of Dr. Holmes's omnibus some genial Cavalier must have been wedged between the grim Puritans, and a sprightly Gaul sat on the lap of the phlegmatic Dutchman.

Cambridge in 1809, or as Mr. Lowell described it, or as it was when 'Zekle' courted 'Huldy,' was still a country village with large open and woodland spaces. Little change had passed over it since Massachusetts became a colony. Even half a century later it recalled to Clough the repose and intellectual atmosphere of Oxford. To Dr. Holmes the place where he has spent the best years of his life

A kind of harbour seems to be,  
Facing the flow of a boundless sea.  
Rows of grey old tutors stand  
Ranged like rocks above the sand;  
Rolling beneath them, soft and green,  
Breaks the tide of bright sixteen—  
One wave, two waves, three waves, four—  
Gliding up the sparkling floor;  
Then it ebbs to flow no more,  
Wandering off from shore to shore  
With its freight of golden ore!  
—Pleasant place for boys to play;  
Better keep your girls away.

Round the Cambridge Common, upon which the gambrel house opened, strayed a few old houses, from whose windows women had watched Lord Percy march to the Chey Chase of Lexington. His home was full of Old World suggestions. It had wainscots, and a crypt-like cellar, and a garret in which a ghost might stand erect. In this house General Ward fixed his head-quarters after Lexington; here he entertained General Washington; here Benedict Arnold received his first commission. Its floors were dented with the butts of the firelocks of the Continental militia; on the walls hung a picture pierced by the rapiers of the British officers, and a mirror at which they adjusted their red coats. In the parlour stood the arm-chair in which Lord Percy sat to have his hair dressed. On one side of the house ran an old-fashioned garden, where lilacs grew side by side with nectarines, and plebeian vegetables jostled patrician

flowers, and where the boy used to play 'Consule Jacobo Madisonio.' In one corner of the garden stood the pear tree which taught him the vanity of human wishes, and under it grew tall sun-flowers, round which flitted the yellowbirds like 'flakes of curdled sunshine.'

The Doctor's prose and poetry are filled with delightful reminiscences of his childhood—his fears, and fancies, and superstitions, his first defeat in the moral battle of life, his first love, his first experience of death, the hush at sundown on Saturday evenings, when the crickets and the frogs alone broke the stillness of the Puritan Sabbath, the sound of the waves breaking on the distant shore, which rose to the ear like the tramp of moving thousands, or the creak, heard from bed, of the woodsleds trailed by the oxen in early morning over the 'complaining snow.' Nothing in his early life weaned him from Old World associations. Even the books which he read were English, painted the life of England, and told of 'Hodge seeking his mug of beer at the alehouse, whereas he had just seen Joe steer for the grocery to get his glass of rum.'

In 1819 he had outgrown the willow wand of Dame Prentiss. For the next five years he went to Cambridge Port School, where among his fellow-pupils was Margaret Fuller, afterwards Madame d'Ossoli, the idol and the centre of transcendental mystics, poetess, critic, and contributor to the 'Dial,' who called Longfellow a 'dandy Pindar,' and at whom Lowell glances in the *Miranda* of the *Fable for Critics*. During one year, the first of his absence from home, he prepared for college at Andover, in the midst of the quiet scenery of the Merrimac valley, which Whittier has made familiar to English readers. In 1825 he entered Harvard. 'Vestigia Quinque Retrorsum' recalls the professors of the day. Among them was Ticknor, 'with honeyed voice and grace,' who preceded Longfellow in the Chair of Literature. After the usual course Dr. Holmes left college—

Armed with his dainty, ribbon-tied degree,  
Pleased and yet pensive, Exite and A.B.

During his undergraduate career he had contributed much comic and satiric verse to the 'Collegian.' In 1830 he made himself famous by the stirring lyric—

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!  
Long has it waved on high,  
And many an eye has danced to see  
That banner in the sky,

which saved the old 'Constitution' from being broken up. The poem was written 'stans pede in uno' in the gambrel house. Up to this point the atmosphere and training of his life were entirely conservative, yet in his enthusiastic patriotism he was American to the core.

He had now to choose a profession. From early childhood the joyous, buoyant Autocrat felt the keenest zest for life, and enjoyed it to the full. As a boy he had tendencies towards flutes and flageolets; he was the possessor of a gun, and a pistol, in the barrel of which he hid his surreptitious cigars. At this distance of time he might confess to being one of the 'gunners' who shot 'Deacon Peleg's tame wild-goose.' Full of animal spirits and vivacity, he had little natural inclination for the ministry. Even if his home had not been visited by sad and wailing ministers, who twitted him with his blessings as a Christian child till he wished he was a Moor, it is difficult to imagine the most brilliant of American wits in the pulpit. Genial and tolerant though he is to all other classes, he is venomous towards ministers of the type of the 'Moral Bully,' who,

Though meekness plants his backward-sloping hat  
And non-resistance ties his white cravat,  
Feels the same comfort while his acrid words  
Turn the sweet milk of kindness into curds,  
As the scarred ruffian on the pirate's deck  
When his long swivel rakes the staggering wreck.

At Harvard in 1830 the tide was setting against Puritan orthodoxy; Amherst College had been founded four years before, to counteract its Liberal tendencies. At the present day he 'believes more than some and less than others,' and likes those who believe more than he does better than those who believe less. He has no faith in 'planting oaks in flower-pots,' but claims the right to strip from the skirts of religion the many articles of belief which are 'bequests of the ages of ignorance that God winked at.' Yet all his writings are penetrated by a deep conviction of the vital truths of religion. Science has not weakened that strong faith in God which finds voice in the Hymn of Trust.

A year's study of the law decided him to adopt the medical profession. The business of a lawyer was as unsympathetic to him as Jack Ketch's, and, like Mr. Lowell, he found that Themis was too jealous a mistress to brook a rival. In 1833 he left

America for Europe. He has jotted many pencilled sketches of the Old World—of Clémence tripping down the Rue de Seine, searches in old bookstalls, musings on the tombs of St. Etienne du Mont, impressions of Salisbury and Strasburg. He went the rounds of the Hôtel des Invalides with Larrey, Napoleon's favourite surgeon. But the man from whom he learned his medical science was Louis. Into all his professional studies he carried the same kindly, tender heart. He utters his 'Laus Deo' that he assisted at no scientific cruelties; he weeps inwardly over the little child in the hospital cot, whose fresh voice, like 'the reedy thrill of the thrush's even song,' rang in his ears thirty years later.

After three years' absence,

the returning tide

Brought back an exile to his cradle's side.

From that time forward Boston has been his home, and he has done much to make it 'the hub of the' American 'solar system.' The Metrical Essay on Poetry, which he read on his return before the Phi-Beta-Kappa Society at Harvard, confirmed and strengthened his literary reputation. Since then his fame has steadily increased till his name as an essayist, poet, wit, humourist, talker, novelist, man of science, and writer of brilliant 'vers d'occasion' is as familiar to the Old as the New World. From 1839 to 1840 he was Professor of Anatomy and Physics at Dartmouth College. In 1847 he became professor of the same subjects at Harvard. He held the Chair of Anatomy continuously from that date till 1882, when he resigned and was elected Emeritus Professor.

From one point of view Dr. Holmes is a survival from the Augustan Age. He recalls a period when Pope was still considered greater than Homer, when Bryant sat in Arctic isolation as the dean of American poets, when Lydia Sigourney was the Transatlantic Hemans, when Halleck was considered to be as a satirist the rival of Byron, and Whittier seemed destined 'for the tar-pot rather than the tripod.' In many points he is in sympathy with that age rather than the present, though years have drawn him towards Liberalism. He allows full credit to the man who is whittled into shape by his own jack-knife; but, other things being equal, prefers the possessor of family portraits to the owner of the 25-cent daguerreotype. He scorns 'haöw' and 'haälth'; the woman who 'calc'lates' in his presence is lost. It took many years for Garrison to convince him of the social claims of the negro. He believes, with Parson Wilbur, that twenty heresiarchs



are nothing to a single *sheresiarch*. He loves horses—saw Plenipotentiary in 1834 and Ormonde in 1886 win the Derby—and prefers a racer to a trotter. A ‘proud pedestrian,’ an oarsman, and, like Bernard Langdon, a boxer, familiar in his youth with the pets of the fancy and the heroes of the prize-ring, he despises the dandified languor of many of his countrymen. Aristocrat, athlete, conservative, insisting on the importance of neat dress and good manners, excelling in the patrician talent of ‘*vers de société*,’ and preferring the straight-backed metre of Dryden and Pope to the nimbler measures of modern verse, he seems to belong rather to the Old than the New World.

But this is only one side of the Autocrat’s character. If he is skilled in the ‘conduct of the clouded cane,’ he is also an adept with the stethoscope. He is fitted to be the Dr. Arbuthnot of Pope’s literary circle, if he were not a leader of modern science. He did not join the progress party of young America. He is without the prophetic element, and his keen sense of the ridiculous was probably excited by the personal peculiarities of many of the Abolitionists, the long hair of Absalom Burleigh, the venerable appearance of Father Lamson, and the gesticulations of Wright. With his horror of masculine women he could not have sympathised with Mrs. Abbey Kelly Foster. But the Civil War and the ‘Search after my Captain’ revealed the fiery force of his latent patriotism. His verse has the neat finish of a cultured, leisured age, which rejects the rough approximations of a century content with ready-made goods. Yet he is essentially an American of the modern type in the nimbleness and freshness of his mind and in the unbounded versatility that achieves success in a variety of different directions.

As a poet his equipment is greater than his achievement. *Figaro çà et Figaro là*, he has been called upon to write verses on every possible occasion. Had he not been the Scherzerade of American feasts he might have written more poetry as immortal as the ‘Chambered Nautilus,’ or more ballads having the ring of—

Come hither, God-be-glorified,  
And sit upon my knee,  
Behold the dream unfolding,  
Whereof I spake to thee  
By the winter’s hearth in Leyden  
And on the stormy sea ;  
True is the dream’s beginning,—  
So may its ending be !

But it is as 'the Autocrat' that his name will live. Out of the medley of bright thoughts and quaint satire shine gleams of deeper feeling and sparks of brilliant fancy. His extraordinary alertness of mind enables him to expound his subject by a variety of ingenious images, to decorate it with novel suggestions, and throw upon it many charming side-lights. His humour is in America almost peculiar to himself. Puritanism checked the outlet of merriment, enforced the duty of resisting ridiculous ideas, determined the demure, covert drollery which characterises the national humour. The 'heady' climate of America sharpens the wits but dries up the flow of animal spirits. Dr. Holmes's humour is not the lean, silent laugh of the Puritan. It is kindly, sympathetic, and enjoying; it blends jest with earnest; he smiles with a playful wistfulness which resembles the mood of the great English masters. He does not depend on the shock of surprise, or on the raciness of exaggeration, or on the irony of understatement. It is a humour which will bear re-reading, because it relies on a deep insight into human nature and the genial interest in life of a kindly, tender-hearted man. There is no scorn or contempt in the Autocrat's laughter; he approaches his subjects not through the head only but through the heart as well.

He is no longer able to say with Father Ezekiel that he is seventy-six years of age 'cum next tater-digging,' but he may equally boast that 'thar ain't no wheres a kitting spryer'n he be.' He is a veteran actor, yet his own lines on the 'Old Player' are true of his perennial youth.

Call him not old whose visionary brain  
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign.  
For him in vain the envious seasons roll  
Who bears eternal summer in his soul.  
If yet the minstrel's song, the poet's lay,  
Spring with her birds, or children at their play,  
Or maiden's smile, a heavenly dream of art,  
Stir the few life drops creeping round his heart,  
Turn to the record where his years are told—  
Count his grey hairs—they cannot make him old!

R. E. PROTHERO.

## *A Mock Idyl.*

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE PRAISE OF FRIENDSHIP.

TREGURTHA and Roscoria are friends. Tregurtha is, as his name sufficiently indicates, a Cornishman. He was also a sharp lad, and, before his term of residence at his first dame's school was fairly run out, he cut his cables and escaped to sea. To this act of insubordination he had been instigated mainly by Louis Roscoria, a small schoolfellow, his junior by several years, and his staunch adherent. The two had shared a room, done each other's lessons, worn each other's hats, taken each other's floggings; and, in short, the Devil himself had never come between them. But they parted pretty soon, for, encouraged by his young friend's energetic support, Dick Tregurtha made haste to follow his destiny and infuriate his parent by running away to sea. Small Roscoria, who was the good boy of the school and always got the prize for conduct, saw his friend well on his way, wished him God-speed, exchanged pocket-knives with him, and then lay on the grass kicking his heels, and howled in his grief until he got caned for refusing to tell what had become of Tregurtha. The friendship thus grounded on mutual services has never been broken.

Dick once wrote from foreign parts an elaborate apology. He said he was sorry, but the sea was his god, and he hoped his father would overlook it. He added that, whether on sea or land, he trusted to be no discredit to the name Tregurtha, and ended by very properly observing, as boys do, that, since he had carved out his own line of action, he should feel his honour engaged to make it a successful one.

Tregurtha's rather crusty parent did not overlook it. On

receipt of this letter he presently called the rest of the family together and thanked God that he was rid of a knave.

Meantime, Roscoria went to Eton, thence to Cambridge. He behaved after the manner of most brilliant men; showed a reluctance to give his mind to what was definitely expected of him, and scored heavily in exams. by some thoughtful rendering of a knotty point in Plato, or by striking ideas based on private reading of the German metaphysicians. He was far from being idle, but he took too æsthetic a pleasure in his work, and vexed the souls of middle-aged dons.

Subsequently Roscoria (who of course left Cambridge without an idea as to his future) went abroad to tutor the sons of an Englishman in Rome. He remained there a year, after which time his father died, and left Louis Roscoria, sole descendant of an old family, owner of a meagre estate in Devonshire, and possessor of means perhaps in proportion to his merit, but nothing over. Even scapegrace Tregurtha was better off, for his bodily wants were provided for on board a ship; and though promotion loomed very vaguely in the distance, yet his immediate salt pork and future were assured.

Suddenly a brilliant and Utopian notion occurred to Louis the Philosopher. He was a bit of a philanthropist, and hopelessly romantic, and had been pained by public-school immorality. He was also an unpractical man by nature. So he resorted to his present employer, Mr. Rodda, also a Devonshire man, and said, 'What if I set up a school?'

'On your own account, man? Why, you would be ruined!' cried old Rodda over his port.

'I doubt it, sir,' responded Roscoria gaily. 'You forget that mouldy old house of mine. I shall never be able to let it, unless to an incurable lunatic, and it is too large for any decent bachelor to live alone in. Good! I fill it with a set of boys. I teach them on an entirely new and original system—and make a little money, which I need not tell you, sir, is wanted in this quarter.'

'I would lay you any money, if you had it, young man, that you fail,' said Mr. Rodda comfortably (he was a little 'cheered' by this time); 'but if you are bent on the experiment, and as I have a high opinion of your principles, though none of your judgment, there is my youngest son, Tom; we can make nothing of him at home, and I don't believe he will ever be any good, so you may just take him as a beginning.'

'No, really, sir? You are too good,' said Roscoria, flushing

grandly with the inflatus of ambition. 'I believe much can be done with boys by taking them young, and if I succeed with dear Tom—nothing ought ever to baffle me again.'

Roscoria settled down in his ancestral home at the head of a collection of such boys as a private tutor will generally get—awkward boys in temper, vicious boys, hopelessly dense boys, backward boys, idle, wool-gathering, foolish, blockish boys. Two lads had been expelled from Eton, but Roscoria thought himself a born reformer. A third youth had been recently superannuated: he was for ballast, Louis said. At first the young schoolmaster governed the wild set gently, having great faith in boyhood. Afterwards he fell one afternoon upon a passage in Plato: 'If he is willingly persuaded, well; but if not, like a bent and twisted tree, they make him straight by threats and blows.'

Blows! Happy thought! 'The influence of my mind and character on theirs has failed,' Roscoria thought. 'Go to, now; let us see whether there be not some animal magnetism by which a lad may be drawn towards the good.' And Roscoria felt up and down his strong young arm, and knew a complacent sense of muscle.

At this time Roscoria met again, and liked as well as ever, Dick Tregurtha.

Tregurtha had grown sun-browned, tall, and broad. Tregurtha had merry blue eyes and a winsome grin. One was happy to shake hands with a man who was obviously on such good terms with his own heart and conscience.

'You helped me to run away from school, you know,' he said, holding out his hand to Roscoria when they first met again.

'Yes; did I serve you well by that?' asked Roscoria, who had grown into what our ancestors called 'a pretty fellow,' with features as correct as his own morality, and a pair of dreamy black eyes.

'You did; I've not forgotten it. Here is your knife in token.'

'And here is yours. Come and dine with me.'

And the two young men got into a corner and foregathered together, and the friendship renewed by romance was riveted firm by reason.

This is the one important feature in these two young men, and the one point that distinguishes them from others. Now passionate natures know no 'friends,' nor commonplace ones neither. A friend is only granted to philosophers.

When a sociable hunting-man asked the other day, 'How do you make a friend? I never had one; I never wanted one,' at

least he knew what he was talking about. And, indeed, few people want a friend, and there are many other sentiments to satisfy the unworthy. Is not Love perennial, a thing as common as June roses? Acquaintance-ship is necessary; affection is a partially inevitable state. But friendship ever was, as it is now, the rarest gift beneath the sun. Ask anyone, all the same, who has ever known an assured friend, whether he would give him up for any pleasure or profit.

Why, see how the theme of Friendship makes even Montaigne serious and eloquent. Observe how it has attracted great minds of all descriptions. If Byron could be brought to affirm that 'Friendship is love without his wings'—well, there *must* be something in it.

Friendship is for two of the same sex, during the difficult period of middle life. Of course the friendship should have been formed during youth, but then it will have been kept in abeyance, as it were, gradually forming into a solid rock to rest upon after the quicksands of love have been settled somehow. Then will it be found—

A living joy that shall its spirits keep  
When every beauty fades, and all the passions sleep.

No wonder it is rare, for if such a glowing glory of content were often known among us, this world would grow too orderly, and men would all be angels for the sake of Friendship!

## CHAPTER II.

ARLETTA OF FALAISE.

'TREGURTHA,' said his friend one summer evening, 'to-morrow is a holiday. The boys are all off on various expeditions, assisted by boats, donkeys, butterfly nets, or tins with worms. Even that little plague Tom Rodda is going, under the charge of a trusty sailor, for a day's shrimping. Now, in the midst of this general mouse-play, what is to become of the cat—meaning me? The pedagogue ought to go off on the spree like everyone else. I am sure he is the hardest worked. You are with me; let us somehow celebrate your arrival ashore. We must go somewhere not haunted by the boys. Boys are my aversion, as you know; besides, if one meets them abroad they are in mischief. One



has to cut up rough, and the result is that greatest of earth's failures, a spoilt holiday. What say you, O comrade, to a day's fishing in the Lyn?'

'I don't say much,' replied Tregurtha; 'but if you will excuse me, I shall go and look up my flies.'

'6.30 A.M. Don't oversleep yourself,' said Roscoria, chuckling youthfully, as he shook Tregurtha by the hand.

Hard as disciplinarian Roscoria ever found it to arise on work-a-days, when getting out of bed meant reading prayers in a stentorian hoarse voice, and then administering an hour's Greek before breakfast, no such difficulty attended his leap from the arms of Morpheus when he heard Tregurtha's thundering knock on this most halcyon Saturday.

'Propitious Heavens, keep but this face all day!' was Louis's greeting to as fair an angler's sky as ever ushered in a holiday. Off clattered the companions in a hired and rakish-looking vehicle; Tregurtha in the front seat chaffing the driver, and Roscoria on an insecure perch behind, swinging his legs, beaming on his fly-book, and altogether presenting an aspect of radiant boyishness wholly incompatible with his grave scholastic calling. Up and down they went, walking up the hills to spare the worthy horse, dashing down them in true Devonshire fashion; past woods and down to the sea at Lynmouth, there to alight, drink cider, and buy fishing tickets. Then on again, rolling along the beautiful road to Watersmeet, where the trees were all in brightest foliage and the wild flowers thick amidst the grass. The morning sun was sucking up the rain of last night from the glittering leaves, and a pensive breeze hovered in the air, causing the birds to sing.

'Hey, Roscoria! but I hope it's not too bright!' was the remark the glory of the day evoked from his companion.

'Tregurtha, do not tempt the gods; the day is heavenly, and if we do not dine on trout to-night——' The remainder of Roscoria's song of praise was abruptly cut short, for in assuming too negligent an attitude for greater convenience of harangue he had overbalanced himself, and now lay prone on the road some twenty yards behind. Having picked himself up and dusted his hat, Roscoria re-ascended in more cautious vein, whilst the driver cheered on his horse, reflecting on the probable results of matutinal cider on a youth whose ordinary 'habit' was the Pierian spring.

After what seemed to these artists of the greenheart-wand an

unconscionably long, though lovely drive, the lowest point was reached where it is of any use to rig up a rod—namely, that nice little field through which the river runs so sweetly, just before you come to Brendon. Here our two holiday-makers descended, with many a parting gibe at their good-natured Jehu. Then down they sat in the moist grass, after the manner of men under thirty, and out each drew a bulging pocket-book. Thereafter, silence, save for such murmurs as: ‘Hallo, I don’t believe this reel runs smoothly!’ ‘Where is that penknife?’ ‘Tregurtha, lend us a blue upright if you value my happiness!’ and so on in that delightful, half-excited talk that precedes trial of one’s luck.

Noon approached; the two young men were fishing steadily, separated by several pools; now and then they passed each other with a cheery jest or an absent-minded greeting, according as they happened to be engrossed in their sport, or only idly lashing at the water. Now Tregurtha was on in front, in a fragrant meadow, with some interested lambs for his spectators. He was musing sleepily as he cast his line, for fish in the Lyn do not run very large, and Tregurtha’s sport, though he had a dozen nice trout in his basket, was not of a nature to claim the highest powers of his intellect. An unexpected rousing came to him, however. A large and goodly fish rolled over suddenly and took the fly well in his mouth, then plunged for the lower depths and lay there sulking. Tregurtha was at once all promptitude and energy. He threw a stone to move the wary trout; he left it alone; he gave it a tentative jerk; he tried every means to persuade or frighten his victim into stirring, but it all seemed useless, the fish was obstinate. Tregurtha was just beginning to wonder whether he should have to walk in and *fetch* his trout, or whether he would take a seat and wait its pleasure, when the matter came to a crisis. One of the inquisitive young lambs, which was very tame, and thought Tregurtha was the farmer’s lad, dashed suddenly in between his legs with a bound, after the sportive manner of its race. Tregurtha stumbled, let the point of his rod down for an instant, recovered his footing, and hastily rectified his position. Alas! is it necessary to state that the line flew up flippantly into the empty air, and the fly settled on the top bough of an alder hanging over the opposite bank? The fish—well, fishes, unlike human beings, know how to use an opportunity; this trout was off to the dentist to cure him of a tooth-ache. Tregurtha was not an irritable man; he did not swear; he did not stamp; he turned to the mischief-working lamb and

said: 'Is this your vaunted innocence, you horrid little meddling beast?' and then he whistled softly to himself, rubbed up his rough hair all on end, and stood still, looking rueful.

'Oh, tell me how to woo thee, love!' sang suddenly a sweet voice round the bend of the stream, and then a break occurred in the song, and the singer petulantly exclaimed, 'Oh, bothered be these stones for ever; they are so slippery!'

Tregurtha's rod fell from his paralysed hand as round the corner came, wading through the shallow part of the running stream close to the head of the very pool he was fishing, a maiden! Yes, and a lady too, though her gown was caught up and thrown over one arm, displaying as its substitute a short striped skirt of brilliant colouring, and her lovely feet shone white through the sunlit waters as unconsciously she stepped along.

'Heaven have mercy on me!' Tregurtha thought wildly, as he stood rooted to the spot, marvelling meanwhile why he did not cast himself into the deep pool before him. The inevitable moment came; the damsel lifted large dark eyes and saw him.

'Oh, I beg—I beg—I *beg* your pardon!' almost roared Tregurtha in the excess of his manly bashfulness.

What did the maid? Blushed crimson first, and stared at the intruder with a speechless horror, letting drop, by instinct, her pretty overskirt. Then she turned quickly, seized the branch of a large oak-tree and tried to raise herself by it to the opposite bank, where, once arrived, she could have vanished in a second through the wood. Alas! as she clung to the bough, the traitor broke, and down went the maiden, with a shivering cry, under the surface of the water. Well, at any rate, here was an occasion where a man need not feel an idiot, nor like Actæon before the wrath of Artemis. Tregurtha felt a sense of positive relief as he plunged in after the lady, and dragged her out and on to her much-desired bank, all breathless, faint, and frightened.

'I wonder now what on earth you would like me to do for you?' Tregurtha asked, depositing his burden respectfully upon a mossy seat.

'Oh—ah!—thank you. I think you had better perhaps go,' the maiden answered, panting still for breath, and shaking her dripping hair.

'You are faint. You would like—at least, no, not some water—you have had enough, and I—I dare not offer you some

whisky. There's your poor hat still in the water. Oh, gracious! to think of my spoiling all your pleasure in this way.'

Tregurtha seized upon the hat, squeezing the water out of it (much to the detriment of its shape) as if it were the juice from an orange. Reduced to a pulp of straw and muslin, he brought it to its mistress, who, smiling, said, 'This hat has seen many a wild frolic, but I sadly fear this most embarrassing, though amusing, incident has finished my companion, and it will cover my foolish head no more. I must go home, or I shall catch a cold.'

'But pray accept my apologies—my most sincere and humblest apologies,' began Tregurtha.

'I beg you will not mention—— Oh dear, dear!' The damsel burst suddenly into uncontrollable, resistless laughter. 'Please *could* you keep away, right round the corner, until I fetch my boots? I am so sorry to have interrupted you in your no doubt successful fishing.' Here she glanced inquiringly at the line caught and mazily entangled in the alder-bush. 'Good morning, sir.'

Tregurtha, blushing deeply, bowed and strode away as though avenging Fate were at his heels—away over the meadow, through its little gate, along the road, down to the river again, where Roscoria stood coolly, immersed in hopes of monster trout.

'Well, old fellow; why, you've been wading! Fish gone?' asked Louis.

'Fish be —— I've had such an experience, Roscoria! I have seen a lady!'

'Mercy on us, Tregurtha! is that so unusual? Why, man, you are almost pale! Tell us your wonderful story.'

Tregurtha did so, 'with stammering lips and insufficient sound,' whilst Roscoria opened his basket and took therefrom an ample lunch, besides displaying the trout he had caught. 'They are not large,' he said, surveying the fish affectionately, 'but they are very beautiful. And now, friend, are you too much overcome for mutton sandwiches, or will you try a limb of that blessed duck that old Rodda sent down?'

'But, Roscoria,' murmured Tregurtha as he ate, 'I am afraid you don't quite enter into the extreme indelicacy of the situation!'

'Far be it from me,' retorted Louis.—'Cake, Tregurtha?'

'Not with ducking, thank you. The lady—her feet—I should say her boots——'

'Were off, I understand,' quoth Louis dryly. 'Hallo! is this the lady?'

He alluded to the appearance of a very small girl, bare-foot, grave, and chubby, who wandered into the meadow from an adjacent farmyard, and stood as near as she dared go to the sportsmen, gazing with friendly, covetous eyes on their outspread repast.

'Child,' said Roscoria at last, 'do you like cake?'

The infant nodded her head solemnly, her big eyes brightening the while.

'Then take hold of this and be merry,' replied the pedagogue, extending an ambrosial slice. The small child hesitated after the manner of her sex and age, hung her head, bit her tiny fingers, and finally advanced and received the donation. She did not seem at all inclined to go, but stood solemnly munching by Roscoria's side as he reclined on the grass, and she did not prevent the crumbs from falling down his neck, which was not pleasant.

'Child,' said Roscoria again, 'you may sit down.' Down sat the wee lass comfortably enough, and gazed into Roscoria's fine black eyes as if she had not often seen so goodly a gentleman. Roscoria endeavoured hard to meet her stare, and for five minutes or so he succeeded; but those two serious blue eyes embarrassed him at length, and, turning to Tregurtha with a somewhat nervous laugh, he observed, in Greek, that the infant was alarming to him, and that he should be compelled to hide his eyes within his robe. 'Who gave you—I mean, what is your name?' Tregurtha asked the baby. True to her training, the child arose, shook out her frock, and made a curtsy, whilst she answered, with effort to remember:

'Hanner Marier.'

'Then Hannah—or Anna—Maria, would your mother give us each a glass of cider, think you?'

'Should you like some?' inquired A. M., as she sought Roscoria's face again.

'Dearly, my lass.'

Anna Maria showed she could move; she positively darted home, to return much slower, and, with a portentous gravity of demeanour, bearing in tremulous hands one glass of cider held very tight. But to whom to give it? There lies a sad struggle for her between duty and inclination. She glanced yearningly at Roscoria's dark head, propped up expectantly on elbow, then she measured Tregurtha's noble length stretched out beside his friend.

Slowly, reluctantly, but overpoweringly came the truth upon her youthful mind: Tregurtha was the taller, *ergo*, in her infant logic, he—the elder—must the first be served. Without waiting an instant, wee Hebe gave the Cornishman his due, and fled away again. Once more she came, more careful even than before; and, with a nascent spark of coquetry in those rustic eyes, she smiled and said: ‘And this, sir, is for *you*!’

‘Here’s your health, my bonny lass!’ cried Louis, raising the glass to his lips. ‘Long may those cheeks of yours retain their roses, and may you ever be as able to look a decent man in the face!’ Anna Maria, not quite comprehending this ovation, turned so earnestly serious, and so riveted her intent gaze on the handsome countenance of Louis, that the unfortunate young man could stand fire no longer, and ended his refreshing drink by the most ignominious fit of choking.

‘You had better go, my dear,’ interposed Tregurtha hastily, slipping a shilling into the child’s hand; ‘he isn’t used to so much admiration.’

Anna Maria reluctantly departed, with many a backward glance at Louis, who, when the firm young feet had borne his small admirer solidly away, threw out his arms with a groan of intense relief and said,—

‘By Heaven, Tregurtha, there is great power in the human eye! I feel completely mesmerised.’

‘What a thing it is to be good-looking!’ observed Tregurtha, lighting a cigar. ‘Now I wonder how stands the heart of this young Adonis? Has he yet learnt that the proper study of mankind is woman?’

Roscoria laughed, tumbled down into the soft grass again, and meditatively responded,—

‘I shall end like Shelley, by finding all modern love unsatisfactory, because of an ideal attachment to Antigone. The lady of this century talks too loud; she cannot laugh either. She is matter-of-fact; she has an eye to the main chance.’

‘You are fastidious, my boy. Case of Narcissus over again, I imagine.’

‘Don’t you be an old fool, Tregurtha,’ said Louis, more pleased than he liked to show by the implied compliment. He rolled lazily to the verge of the river, and was just about to examine his own visage, when he suddenly caught his friend’s eye of malicious criticism, and, after affecting to have seen a trout in the water, jumped up and said, ‘Come along!’



‘Hallo! my rod. I forgot. It is still adhering to an alder.’

‘Fetch it, then.’

‘I daren’t.’

‘Still fearing the silver-footed Thetis? Why, man, she will be far enough by this time! But if that is the case, matters are easily settled; I’ll go.’

Roscoria went off accordingly, wondering what on earth he would *not* do for Tregurtha, and, when he had waded the stream, climbed the tree, disentangled the line, and substituted other flies for those which had been jerked off, the two anglers started at a brisk walk to go further up the river.

It is a pleasant country this, in which to spend a summer day. The trees are very magnificent and full of foliage; the glens are bold and varied; and the river courses glittering through many a winsome spot. With good sport, light hearts, intense capacities for enjoyment, the two young men spent a rare afternoon, to be long remembered in their winter evenings as one of the brightest of their holidays. They were approaching towards six o’clock the boundary of the famed Doone Valley, where they owned the fair spell of the enchanter Blackmore, who, with his poetic wand, has conjured up the past for us, and haled dead men out of their coffins to live again and be famous beyond any the wildest hopes of their lifetime.

Then, whilst musing by himself, Roscoria chanced to notice a churlish coolness in the air, a depth of shadow from the neighbouring oak, a meaning hush and quiet stealing all about; and all he said to the deepening beauty of the summer eve was this,—

‘Hang it all, I must put up my rod!’ Sitting with his back turned to the river that he might not be tempted, Roscoria did so slowly, to give Tregurtha as many extra seconds as possible. He then went to fetch his unwilling companion, who had to be hauled from the bank by the coat-collar; then off and away to the place appointed for Jehu to meet them, and home in contented silence to the Young Gentlemen’s Academy. The supper consumed within the halls of Torres that night was truly Homeric. Witness the behaviour of the cook. She was an energetic woman; but she sank down at last upon the nearest chair, and, wringing stalwart arms in desperation, cried, ‘May the Lord stay their stomachs, for I cannot!’

## CHAPTER III.

## THE GODDESS.

ONE sultry afternoon Roscoria—the vices of boyhood vexing overmuch his burdened heart—betook himself to green meadows with a volume of Plato. He had announced his intention of reading in the same until he had cooled down, a process which usually took him precisely three hours. Long before he was expected, however, he was heard by Tregurtha coming along the bridge over the moat towards his front window, and presently he sprang in by the same, with an excited look in his eyes and the manner of a man who has a fact to tell.

‘Save you, Tregurtha! I am hit hard,’ was his greeting.

‘I beg your pardon,’ said Tregurtha politely, looking up from a piece of carpentering.

‘Did you ever hear, Dick, of love at first sight?’

‘Yes; and a very shady proceeding it always seemed to me, if, indeed, it be not a chimera. But, Roscoria, you are not feeling anything in your head, are you? Giddiness, perhaps? A feeling as if you had lost your memory? I hope it’s nothing serious, but, my dear fellow, the sun *was* rather hot when you started.’

‘You great ass! I tell you it is not the head that is affected; it’s the *heart*.’

‘Same thing, dear boy.’

‘I have seen, Tregurtha—I have seen an Olympian goddess treading the grass of a nineteenth-century field!’

‘You’ve seen a milkmaid!’

‘Richard, if I thought I could annihilate you, I would try. She was majestic, pensive, golden-haired, distracting; a daughter of the gods, I swear!’

‘My dear sir, I think you had better take it easy,’ interposed Tregurtha anxiously. ‘Take the armchair near the window, and open your grief. There really is no hurry.’

Roscoria was at last induced to sit down, Tregurtha standing by him, with bent brows of perplexity, in his shirt-sleeves, with his hammer still in his hand. Louis began his recital by a torrent of Greek, comparing his mysterious goddess to almost every heroine of antiquity, and using so great a multitude of

compound adjectives and fantastic turns of speech that his hearer faintly seized a newspaper and fanned himself therewith.

'As it is some time since I was at school, Roscoria,' interpolated his friend on the first opportunity, 'you will excuse me if I do not quite follow you. If you could speak English mainly, I would pardon the use of a few Grecisms.'

'I am sorry,' said Roscoria, 'and, by Jupiter, will try to speak of her in English. Listen. I was taking my solitary ramble through a field skirting a beautiful little wood of Sir John Villiers', filled with wild hyacinths. I had my eyes fixed on my book for a long while, but when I lifted them, what think you, friend, they saw?'

'From the way in which you have carried on, I should imagine a woman.'

Roscoria looked up in admiration at his friend's sagacity.

'She came straight by me, walking softly and dreamily, looking aside at the blue hyacinths, and her hat was held in her hand, so that the sun shone on her wonderful hair till it scintillated like a shower of gold. She was tall, yes; but she had an air so ethereal, and in her white dress she showed so like a cloud, that I held my breath lest she should vanish. I thought, indeed, she was some mystic vision I had conjured up from Plato's pages—the Absolute Good she might have been—she was so fair, so spiritual, and the air was so still around us; and there were we alone in the summer silence.'

'Did she speak?' inquired Tregurtha (for he was a sailor, and his friend's manner was impressive).

'When she saw me standing still before her she dropped her eyes and made for a gate leading into the wood. The fastening was troublesome, so I went and opened it for her. She turned as she passed through, and bent her head—with a queenliness, Heavens!—and smiled and whispered a word of thanks. I saw her eyes then for an instant; they—but I ought not to speak of them, and, after all, I don't know what colour they were. She walked a short distance whilst I was shutting the gate again, and I was not the man to spoil her solitude, so I went off very fast; but looking back just once—only once, Tregurtha—I saw her standing amongst those blue-bells, gathering them, whilst the sunbeams slanted through the pale green larch boughs on to that glinting, golden head. After all, what immense possibilities this world contains! I believe this—this vision to have been the

daughter of a mortal man who was once a boy, probably also a schoolboy! But then there was a woman in the case.'

'Thank you, old fellow,' said Richard, consulting his watch; 'this has been very instructive; just as good as "Half-hours with the best Poets;" but I suppose we must all descend to commonplace. You must tone yourself down and come to supper.'

'Supper!' gasped Roscoria blankly.

'Supper,' retorted Tregurtha firmly. 'You shall note that not all your boys are overcome by an *affaire de cœur*, and that if you keep them waiting much longer there will be a bread riot. Here is comfort for you. The Tremeneheeres give a tennis party; hie you to it, and if this Oread of yours be mortal, she will surely there be found. It is a good way to distinguish women from angels: the former, if young, can scarcely resist a party.'

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE WAY TO TAKE A PARTY.

IN the interval between the evening mentioned and the day of the tennis-party Roscoria was out early and late, whenever his calling permitted, roaming restlessly in the woods, haunting the sunny fields like a dark shadow, seeking for his goddess in the spot where he had seen her, and in every other romantic and flowery nook that he thought likely. Of course he never saw her. If he had been his own cook, the venerated Mrs. Tartlett; if he had been his youngest pupil, small Tom Rodda; if he had been the parish blacksmith, or cow-boy, or even the parson—a Paterfamilias—he would assuredly have seen her. But as he was her lover, and was searching for her high and low, he never caught so much as the glimmer of her fair white robe dim in the distance.

Consequently, Roscoria grew irritable, knowing the pangs of baffled will, but he did not lose his hope. He could have sworn that he should meet her again. So on the important day he got himself up in white flannels and pre-Raphaelite red cap, caught up his racquet, and ran off. Halfway towards his destination he wisely slackened his pace, lest, meeting his charmer, he might be too much out of breath to speak to her. As he crossed a field not far from the hallowed locality where he had lost his heart, he stopped short and passed his hand across his eyes. Yes; surely

she was no other! A tall form, walking in that dreamy, quiet, contented way that he had noticed before; in a white dress—the white dress—and there came the sunlight down on her golden hair as she passed from under the shade of that oak. She held as a screen a large horse-chestnut leaf, and she stooped often to gather or to scrutinise some wild flower. It was the same lady, and the charm was the same. Roscoria began by an impulsive start after her, then he stopped again, for what could he possibly say? He could not rush forward and exclaim, ‘Lady, you are the most adorable creature beneath the sun—what is your name?’ for that would sound bizarre, not to say impertinent. As he was thus musing, however, a chance occurred in his favour: drawing out her kerchief, the unconscious maiden let an envelope slip from out her pocket and fall noiselessly in the grass. She walked on unwitting, but Roscoria saw his opportunity, ran up and seized the letter. It was addressed to ‘Miss Lyndis Villiers.’

In the first fervour of his satisfaction Roscoria imprinted a chaste salute upon the letters of her name; then, looking again at the handwriting, he observed, with a sharp revulsion of feeling, that it was rather manly in character. Perhaps he had kissed his rival’s ink! With a shiver Roscoria proceeded to make the most of his time. He walked up after the lady, doffed his small cap, and said, ‘Excuse me—this is your letter, I think?’ The lady gave a slight start, and received her property with a gratitude much tempered by the haughty surprise of the Englishwoman when addressed by a stranger. Then she blushed, for she recognised the handsome stranger. And then there seemed nothing more to be done, and Roscoria’s wits were hampered by his admiration of her, so she bowed and went her way. This was well; but her way happened also to be Roscoria’s, and he walked faster than she did; moreover, there was before them a stile, and beyond that stile the only lane, a narrow one, towards the Tremeneheeres. He walked behind, like a footman, until the delay at the said stile obliged him to come up with the lady. Then, as he clomb the barrier and noted the narrowness of the lane below, a sense of the comic struck him hard, and he burst into a cheery, irrepressible laugh. Much pained he was with his own irreverence when he had done so, but Miss Villiers turned at the sound, and smilingly accosted him as she stood in the lane, looking upwards,—

‘I fear I detain you; go on, you walk more quickly than I.’

So brilliant an idea now flashed into Roscoria’s brain that he saw blue sparks before his eyes for several minutes afterwards.

'You have a racquet to carry; as we are bound in the same direction, apparently, may I——?' Her lips parted for thanks, so Roscoria was over the stile with the dexterity of an acrobat, and next moment was walking by his goddess's side, her racquet in his hand, in the most blissful tremor.

'I ought to tell you my name to show you that I am respectable,' he began. 'I am Louis Roscoria, an instructor of youth, and owner of that curious mouldy building, Torres Hall.'

'That beautiful, ivy-grown, moated mansion, with willows growing all round?'

'The same, if you call it beautiful.'

'I have sketched it several times from a distance already (beatification of Roscoria!), although I have only recently come to live here. Of course I know your name. Have you not a great friend, a Mr. Tregurtha?'

'Rather!' cried Louis, 'and I am glad that people connect the fact with my name.'

'Why, of course,' said Lyndis, looking up with kind eyes; 'you two are called "Damon and Pythias."'

'I dare say. I am awfully proud of Dick (that's Tregurtha, Miss Villiers); he is a fine fellow and he manages me completely. Whatever he suggests seems to be better, somehow, than what I can think out for myself. It's his *nature*, you know; there's no system about it, whatever: that's just where it lies. He has a way with him; I have no way with me; and all the philosophy in the world won't give me one. Only, I hold that he makes one radical mistake in judging of my system of education: he won't let me thrash my own boys when he can help it, which I think is rather hard on any preceptor.'

'Oh, it is!' said Lyndis sympathetically; 'but I dare say you are too fond of correction, or whence this dudgeon at being debarred from it?'

'Well—— But if there is such an anomaly as "*righteous indignation*," what a fervour of godliness must the sight of the average boy excite in the breast of the right-minded schoolmaster! And can indignation find a better vent than blows? Why, even the long-suffering Moses had to break something when he found his Hebrews dancing round a calf!'

'I would not adopt a profession which develops the indignation to so great an extent,' said Lyndis, rather amused by her companion's impetuosity.

'Do not say that, Miss Villiers; whatever we have most at



heart will disgust us sometimes. We have our ideal (or we ought to have), and the reality is coarse indeed in comparison, but it is better than nothing at all; and is it not in itself an ennobling thing to be constantly engaged in a tremendous struggle, whether the vantage be to you or no?’

Roscoria looked at Lyndis with a far-away intensity and a sad determination of expression, which made her think she had never seen so enthusiastic a young man.

‘It is a glorious vocation, teaching,’ said Lyndis gently.

‘It seems so when you praise it.’

Lyndis here grew a little absent-minded. She could follow him when he talked of his boys, but when he began on this new vein of sentiment she knew she must begin to dictate to him what he should say next. So she observed that the weather was fine, a fact that Roscoria had noticed before.

‘It is the finest day I ever saw in my life, as well as the happiest,’ he replied loudly, and with fervour.

Beautiful Lyndis! she looked up with those starry eyes of hers and—begged his pardon? So the poor young man was obliged to pretend he had said something else. And there they were at the Tremenheeres’ gate already; and Lyndis, with a somewhat more distant smile, took her racquet, passed through the tiresome gate, and was lost amongst the laurels, whilst Roscoria hesitated. He did not attempt to follow her, but, after speaking a few words to his host and hostess, went in search of Tregurtha.

Now Tregurtha, though he had started a quarter of an hour after his friend, and taken the longer route by the circumambient road, instead of going across country, had—for some reason inexplicable except to very young people—arrived long before Roscoria, and was disposed to be foolishly jocose upon the subject. Louis checked this tendency in his friend, though with some difficulty; and Tregurtha grew sombre as he recounted the boredom of his experiences over a set of tennis, wherein his antagonists had dawdled about without any manner of spirit, whilst, as he himself was the best player on the ground, his partner naturally was the worst. Observing that Roscoria grew lax in his attention to these complaints, Tregurtha went and hovered aimlessly around a tea-table. He was speedily dislodged from this refuge by the hostess herself, who stormed up to him with a rustle of silk akin in sound to the spray of a mighty cataract, and an all-conquering inflation of demeanour peculiar to the grandees of Devonshire and Cornwall, and, seizing him by the arm,

bore down upon the other end of the long *salon* with him in tow. Tregurtha was a Cornishman himself, so he was equal to the occasion—drew up his height and adopted an attitude of breezy and elegant ease as he listened to Mrs. Tremenheere lisping something about ‘a Miss ——’ (he could not catch the name), introduce—very clever—not my style—pretty though—’ etc., until she stormed off again, leaving Tregurtha anchored opposite a small but rather stately foreign-looking damsel, of pleasing exterior, with a pair of great soft blue-black eyes, which were gazing up at him with an expression of absolute fright. The occasion did not seem to warrant this nervousness, and Tregurtha was just thinking to himself, ‘What a shame to bring her out just yet! she looks so young and shy,’ when the maiden before him turned hastily round and slipped out by the French window on to the lawn, laughing consumedly. That laugh! he knew it. Dick pursued in hot curiosity and identified her. This was she—the heroine of the stockingless episode—this was Thetis—this was Arletta of Falaise.

‘I think we have met before,’ quoth he, not without relish of the joke. But the lady of the hyacinthine eyes was too deeply conscious of that fact to enunciate a syllable. So there they two stood together on that almost deserted lawn (let us not be compelled to explain that everyone else was drinking claret-cup!), under the heat of that summer sun, for several silent moments; and the man was losing his heart.

There was magic in the air that afternoon, for out came Roscoria presently (looking very much *en l’air*), and with him a tall, fair-haired woman, who only wanted wings. Tregurtha forgot himself in an instant, and, laying his hand on Louis’s shoulder, led him up to Thetis, impressively and proudly observing,—

‘Miss ——, allow me to introduce my friend’ (with emphasis) ‘Louis Roscoria!’

‘Keeper of the Wild Beasts’ Asylum, Torres Hall,’ murmured the said Roscoria irreverently. ‘I have been deputed to arrange another set; shall we four play?’

Tregurtha gave vent to a muffled cheer, and the quartett marched (with some unseemly haste, lest other men should take their bishoprics) to the best ground, and there began. Tregurtha and Roscoria were noted players; together they were, in Devonshire at least, invincible. In a single, Tregurtha had the best of it.

The set was exciting. At first the two sides won game for game. Lyndis, as a tennis-player, was grace personified. She

looked so lovely and moved so lightly that it seemed a marvel why hers was not always the winning side. Roscoria, too, exerting every muscle and writhing about with the cleverness of a lively cobra, ought to have done wonders, but he tried too hard, and lost. Tregurtha, with less grace, had a longer reach and a greater power of hard hitting, so he turned to his partner about the fourth game, saying, 'We will win this set, I think,' and proceeded to do so. His partner was a capital player, shirked no balls, and had a prompt little way with a back-hander, which looked spirited and was useful. It was she who won the set (said Tregurtha), for it was she who returned Roscoria's last serve, with the twist on, by a malicious little slant just over the net, where the ball fell almost a yard before the feet of the goddess Lyndis, who beamed with gracious impotence upon it.

The baffled pair, Roscoria and Miss Villiers, strolled to an arbour, and there sat talking. It might have been ten minutes that they sat there—as Roscoria thought it was—or it might have been an hour and ten minutes to boot. Anyhow, it was Heaven. There sat Lyndis Villiers in a low wicker chair, all embowered in fragrant honeysuckle, and looking herself like pink eglantine with her gold hair and soft rose cheeks. The admiring sunlight played on her dress, all snowy white, save where a pretty caprice had moved her to place a bunch of glittering buttercups. There she rested, one hand round a branch of honeysuckle, her eyes still, kind, and peaceful; her voice sweet and calm, speaking her very thoughts, and those such wise and pure ones! There was Lyndis, the Ideal realised, and there opposite sat Roscoria, clasping his knee in his hands in deep preoccupation, not himself at all, nor conscious of himself, but 'a self aloof, that gazed and listened like a soul in dreams, weaving the wondrous tale it marvels at.' He only knew from time to time, as her voice ceased, or her head was turned away for a moment, that he had come under one of those divine madresses which the gods send upon men; that Life grew more wonderful every moment, and that ever after he should be able to say—I have once been happy.

Meanwhile Tregurtha and his partner of the white face and dark eyes were eating strawberries in an adjacent hayfield. It was pleasant there also, and the damsel, for all her grave looks, was playful, and conversation was uninterrupted. 'Tell me a sea story,' she asked, after a little desultory persiflage had been exchanged; and Tregurtha settled himself on a large haycock and began to recount his own adventures in various storms and

casualties on the ocean, just as he told them to Roscoria's boys at night. And as he did so, his blue eyes kindling, and his hands closing and unclosing with the excitement of memory and the thought of the wild sea wind, he caught full sight of the blue-black eyes of his hearer, who had come nearer and was watching and listening to him with parted lips. She reminded him of a woman he had known years ago in Spain, who died; and those eyes struck a sharp pain to his heart, so that he finished his story with his hand over his brow to keep them from him. So, as he did not look again at her, Rosetta quietly finished all the strawberries, for she was, as yet, very young.

A loud, impatient halloo aroused them both, as a stout, warlike, flurried, elderly gentleman came puffing indignantly through the tumbled hay (most like a threshing machine!), much encumbered by a large feminine shawl, which he carried on his arm, and shouting to Rosetta,—

‘Why, why, dash it, my love, I call this insubordination, you know. Didn’t I tell you an hour you should have and no more? And how long do you suppose you’ve kept the horses waiting? I can tell you, madam, you’re the only human being who dare keep Admiral Sir John Villiers’s carriage and himself waiting in this way. How d’ye do, sir? I’m glad to make your acquaintance. Sailor, I see. Of course! didn’t I know what the tattooing on your wrist meant? Got an anchor on mine, sir. Confound your impudence, Miss, what are you laughing at? Oh! the shawl—stuck to my coat-button, has it? Well, and if it has; have you no reverence, you saucy minx? Put it round your neck, treasure. I hate a woman who catches cold!’

Thus was Rosetta swept off from the glances of her first admirer by Admiral Sir John Villiers, the owner of Braceton Park, renowned as the most awkward customer in Devonshire.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE GODDESS IS HUMAN.

THE friends found their way home together in the cool of the evening; both very quiet, but Roscoria evidently meditating some deep design. At night, growing confidential as they patrolled the garden, smoking, Louis proceeded to rave of his goddess ‘for an hour by his dial.’ Tregurtha heard and nodded

in silence. He was a more reserved man than his friend, so he did not even mention the maid who ate his share of the strawberries. Indeed, he forgot her whilst listening to the outpourings of his ingenuous comrade.

'I shall never be any good at my work, I'm afraid,' complained Roscoria; 'that beautiful face is the only thing my mind will comprehend.'

'Well, if I were you, as you seem so far gone, I should take some steps,' advised Dick. 'I'm no friend of shilly-shallying. If you love the girl, go and tell her so, I advise.'

'I wish I'd more money,' sighed the schoolmaster.

'Many a good Paterfamilias has wished that before you, my lad,' observed Tregurtha, with a laugh. 'How does the country curate get on with his six children, do you suppose?'

'Eh, I don't know. O Lord! I hope I never shall be the father of a *boy*!' exclaimed the pedagogue, with a sudden, agitated glance up at the bedroom windows, as the dread crossed his mind that he might have been overheard all this while.

However, all objection melted before the warmth of Roscoria's attachment, and one night he gave up his keys and authority to Tregurtha, bade him bolt the shutters and troll out prayers to the household in his jovial bass, for Louis Roscoria was going to a ball to 'declare himself.'

He had found out all about Lyndis (or thought he had). She was the niece of Admiral Sir John Villiers; her father dead; her mother married again to a hunting, racing type of man who wanted no step-daughter about. So fair Lyndis was staying with her uncle for the time, looking after the housekeeping in return for his kind protection. But Roscoria gathered much hope that his suit might possibly be the means of relieving her from any unsettled feeling that she might have about her future. And thus it came to pass that at the termination of their fifth dance together they were sitting in a ferny grotto—the goddess was all robed in blue this time, as if she had brought down a piece of the summer sky trailing after her—and Louis began all at once to show the tenderness he felt.

There was a little of the usual fencing with the subject, and then Roscoria came out with a few leading questions. He had heard rumours—very disquieting rumours—in short, would she set his mind at rest?

Lyndis bent the glory of her mystic eyes upon him for an instant, whilst she said,—

'I was going to be married, but we were obliged to put it off. Where are you going, Mr. Roscoria?'

'I don't know,' said Louis miserably. He had risen and taken a few steps away, but he came back again and leant against the wall by her side, breathing quick and brokenly.

'What is the matter?'

'Oh!' groaned Roscoria, 'I wanted you.'

He heard no answer, so he straightened up and took her kind hand and said, 'Never mind; I was a fool not to be silent; but—but—if you had known your own charm, would you have made me so unhappy?'

Then there seemed a light in her eyes which was not there before, and a whisper was borne to him low and far away as if it were the echo of the voice of Fate thousands of years ago,—

'By the favour of Heaven I am free!'

Shortly afterwards Louis believed he heard himself saying, 'Why did you forsake him, for *he* never did it?'

'The Admiral forced the match upon me—he is so arbitrary! I consented in a cowardly moment; but that was before I had seen you. The gentleman I was betrothed to saw I was not contented before even I knew it myself; he himself volunteered to release me. Of all the unselfish men I know, Mr. Rodda is—'

('The deuce he is!') thought Roscoria to himself. 'Not Eric Rodda, Miss Villiers—the young fellow I tutored at Rome? Brother of Tom? Poor fellow! I feel like a brute, somehow.'

'No use to feel so, Louis; it was all over before ever I saw you.'

'“Louis”—you darling! Could you put up with a very modest style of existence—at Torres? You said you admired the situation.'

'Oh! are you poor?'

'The proverbial church-mouse is a Rothschild to me.'

'What a cruel thing that is!' sighed Lyndis; 'when the Admiral, my mother, my stepfather, all insist on my marrying a rich man.'

'Then, my dear lady, go and do it in Heaven's name!' cried Roscoria, and at sight of her surprised face he said, repentantly, 'I beg your pardon—Lyndis—darling.'

'Which do you put first?' asked Lyndis, smiling sweetly, 'Obedience or Love?'

'Love,' emphatically responded Louis.

'Oh, Mr. Roscoria, and you a schoolmaster!'



'And you, Miss Villiers, tell me, do you prefer the main chance, or me?'

'Alas! I am no lover of abstractions.'

She came a little towards him as she said it, and he had her hand again.

'This dear hand—shall it be mine?'

No answer, save that propitious starlight in her eyes.

'Lyndis, one kiss, that I may know you are mortal.'

'I daren't,' she said, and gave him one. 'If the Admiral were to come round the corner—— I say no more.'

She gave him a stephanotis from her hair to keep as her favour, and then whispered apprehensively,—

'You have no idea what a naval officer can be when he takes to match-making. I shall have to fight this out some day with him.'

'No; allow me,' said Roscoria.

'If you dare; but—*this* is after supper.'

('Oh, how *can* you'!) expostulated the lover.

Then, being a serious maiden, who knew what she was doing, Lyndis pressed his hand and quietly, but finally, spoke,—

'Mr. Roscoria, go home and think it over.'

She had stepped into the brilliant light of the ballroom, and vanished from his sight. Roscoria went home as in a dream. A shifting picture was before him—in front, smiling scenes of bliss and love; in the background, Nemesis, in the garb of a naval officer.

PERCY ROSS.

(To be concluded.)

## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE this month contains a detached page, an advertisement, if you please, or a request, or an appeal. Everyone who has read 'All Sorts and Conditions of Men' is asked to try to make that pretty dream come through the Gate of Horn, instead of the Ivory Gate. Not many novels 'with a purpose' do anything towards achieving their unæsthetic aim, but Mr. Besant's novel has already gone very near to endowing East London with a Palace of Pleasure. That was what his heroine succeeded in doing in the romance; that, we hope, is what will be accomplished in reality. Thanks to the Beaumont Fund, and to the exertions of many rich people, and of still more self-denying people who are far from rich, funds enough have been obtained to make a start with the Palace. A work well begun is half done; but this is a very large work, and needs a great deal of beginning. For almost the first time, if not the very first, it has been recognised that man needs something more than bread to make life worth living, something more than elementary education to make a mind a thing worth having. Into the sordid and monotonous life of the East-end, this scheme of the People's Palace of Pleasure hopes to introduce a little enjoyment. Our dreadful modern habit of herding in huge cities deprives existence of all that used to be enjoyable. In our great-grandfathers' time the fields, and air, and nature were close at hand. Keats's Ode to the Nightingale was written where the barrel-organ now brings the only 'wood-notes wild.' We cannot stretch our legs up Tottenham Hill, and presently, among the pied meadows, fall an angling, like our Father Walton, and a discoursing with singing milkmaids. The pleasures of the urban poor must be urban, and should be something better than beer, gin, betting, pigeon-fancying, and personal violence. In the Palace of Pleasure they will find swimming baths—which the poorest Parisian can enjoy, and for want of which we have lost the right to sneer at the dingy foreigner. He is a man who often bathes, and where are most of our labouring classes to bathe in the present state of London? If nothing but baths were provided by this new endowment, it would already be in the way to make a healthy little social revolution. But it will also give people a better club than

the pot-house ; it will give them reading-rooms, and books, and papers, and society, and music, and pictures, and instruction in the arts, and the handicrafts which border on art. All these things, even if they were carried to an ideal perfection, would not make the East-end, nor the West-end, a place where a man would willingly live in who had been 'breathed on by the rural Pan.' But Pan seems only to breathe on a few people now, and the rest will be made sensibly happier, gentler, kinder, and wiser, by finding some relief from the monotonies of toil and dissipation. The Palace should be, and let us hope will be, a little island of light in the 'City of Dreadful Night,' as the pessimist poet Thomson (not the author of 'The Castle of Indolence'), called this metropolis. Mr. Tracy Tupman, when he heard of a deserving object, was wont sedulously to recommend it to his friends. Let us all imitate Mr. Tupman, and also give as each can afford to the object which we recommend. I suppose there will be five-courts in the Palace of Pleasure. Squash-racquets, too, should not be neglected—it is a cheap game when once the materials are provided, and gives splendid exercise. Miss Tennant, in her explorations of the life of the London street boy, found that he could not play games: he had forgotten the rules, and his character lacked the necessary discipline. Think of the state of a nation whose populace have not the good temper and fairness to play games—games which the Lydians invented to distract their minds from the lack of dinner during a famine! The People's Palace, one trusts, will supply a little of this neglected kind of education. I hope its grounds will have room for football. It will not settle the Social Question ; it will not have any effect on Politics ; but it takes a step in the direction of recognising, with Aristotle, that not *life*, but an enjoyable life, is the thing to be aimed at in every community of Men.

\* \* \*

Life would be made more enjoyable, an angler points out to me, if the waters in Regent's Park, Hyde Park, Battersea Park, and (he says) St. James's Park, were stocked with fish, and if people were allowed to fish in them. I do not believe fish would thrive in St. James's Park pond, because it seems to have an asphalte bottom, it is very shallow, and it is always being cleaned out. But even now there are fish in the Serpentine, and there might be very good sport in the Regent's Park. In July there are dozens of men with rods sitting patient by the Canal near Lord's. I cannot imagine what they are fishing for, but they do not catch less than I personally capture in the Kennett, at

Hungerford, or in any other stream where a haughty race of trout rise only at the dry fly. Yet I enjoy the fruitless effort, for hope springs eternal, and I have several times been favoured with a glorious rise. Well, why should not the poor anglers of London be permitted to cast angle, say, in the Regent's Park water? Anglers from the bank might be permitted to exercise their peaceful craft free, while it is suggested that a shilling might be charged for the use of a boat, and the money would help to pay for stocking the waters. No human beings can be more quiet than anglers—roughs do not take a hand at this pastime. If the only difficulty is a question of Crown rights, it does not seem probable that the Crown will be very jealous of the exclusive privilege of angling for roach and perch in the Royal parks. There may be difficulties not obvious to him who merely glances at the topic; but if such difficulties are not insuperable, the cheap delight of nations might be greatly increased without any revolutionary legislation.

\* \* \*

M. Zola is not a sporting character. In one of his novels, however, which I prefer not to introduce more particularly to a British audience, he brings in the game of *crosse*, which is not the same as our *la crosse*. The game is also alluded to in the late M. Charles Deulin's 'Contes du Roy Gambrinus,' a capital collection of the fairy tales of French Flanders. In one of these nursery legends, a great *crosse* player, known as *le Grand Choleur*, plays a game with the Devil, and beats him. It seems to be a splendid game, a kind of heroic golf, played not over links, but all across country. Indeed, *crosse* is to golf what *pallone* is to lawn-tennis—a kind of gigantic version of it—a sport for giants. In M. Zola's novel they play a 'foursome,' that is, two a side. The ball is called *la cholette*, and is described as 'a little wooden egg;' it is tee'd with the small end uppermost. The club, or *crosse*, is described as a *maillet au fer oblique*, with a long handle or shaft. The iron head makes it more like a bunker iron than a play club. Students of games will remember that wooden balls were used in the old game of pall-mall. After they have tee'd, M. Zola says, 'Zacharie, for his first stroke in a series of three' (whatever that may mean), 'sent the *cholette* more than four hundred yards over the fields of beet.' What an almost incredible swipe, and over what a dangerous hazard! He had to go across country because people used to get killed when the game was played on the roads. People should keep out of the way; they do in Scotland, when you cry 'Fore!' after which it is justifiable homicide. Thus they go on, in M. Zola's novel, and *running*

*all the time*, so as to combine a steeplechase with this heroic golf. As the players are miners, the starved and oppressed proletariat, what would they not do if they had plenty to eat? They cover two leagues and a half in one hour, but the play and the rules thereof remain a mystery. Apparently you may hit your opponent's ball into a hazard. The description shows that the whole body of the players is put into the long driving; but how they manage about holes, and whether they 'put' with their drivers, does not appear. Sometimes ten leagues a day are covered by enthusiasts—*enragés* M. Zola calls them. People don't play after forty, they are too stiff. But a man can play golf as long as he can toddle. What a pity that M. Zola, instead of wasting his talents on novels, does not give us a volume on *la crosse*, with the rules and directions for playing!

\* \* \*

People have written sentiment on 'the old loves of our loves.' What company we might all keep if the old lovers of our old books could visit us! Each worn volume you pick up on a stall has had its masters and mistresses, folk quite as good as you, and better often. Sometimes they leave their mark—name-plate or arms—on the cover; more frequently they are anonymous, and only to be conjectured. I bought Diderot's 'Essays on Painting,' lately, in old French red morocco and watered silk linings. It had been (a scrawl on the fly-leaf said) the gift of Prince Henry of Prussia to C. Caillard, *Ministre Plénipotentiaire de France in Berlin*, in the fourth year of the Republic. A set of verses follows on other old owners of old books in 'a twopenny treasury wondrous to see.'

#### GHOSTS IN THE LIBRARY.

Suppose, when now the house is dumb,  
 When lights are out, and ashes fall—  
 Suppose their ancient owners come  
 To claim our spoils of shop and stall,  
 Ah me! within the narrow hall  
 How strange a mob would meet and go,  
 What famous folk would haunt them all,  
 Octavo, quarto, folio!

The great Napoleon lays his hand  
 Upon this eagle-headed N,  
 That marks for his a pamphlet banned  
 By all but scandal-loving men,—

## AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

A libel from some nameless den  
Of Frankfort—*Arnaud, à la Sphère*,  
Wherein one spilt, with venal pen,  
Lies o'er the loves of Molière.<sup>1</sup>

Another shade—he does not see  
'Boney,' the foeman of his race—  
The great Sir Walter, this is he  
With that grave homely Border face.  
He claims his poem of the chase  
That rang Benvoirlich's valley through;  
And *this*, that doth the lineage trace  
And fortunes of the bold Buccleuch;<sup>2</sup>

For these were his, and these he gave  
To one who dwelt beside the Peel,  
That murmurs with its tiny wave  
To join the Tweed at Ashestiel.  
Now thick as motes the shadows wheel,  
And find their own, and claim a share  
Of books wherein Ribou did deal,  
Or Roulland sold to wise Colbert.<sup>3</sup>

What famous folk of old are here!  
A royal duke comes down to us,  
And greatly wants his Elzevir,  
His Pagan tutor, Lucius.<sup>4</sup>  
And Beckford claims an amorous  
Old heathen in morocco blue;<sup>5</sup>  
And who demands Eobanus  
But stately Jacques Auguste de Thou!<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire des Intrigues Amoureuses de Molière, et de celles de sa femme.* (*A la Sphère*.) A Francfort, chez Frédéric Arnaud, MDCXCVII. This anonymous tract has actually been attributed, among others, to Racine. The copy referred to is marked with a large N. in red, with an eagle's head.

<sup>2</sup> *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810.

*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1806.

'To Mrs. Robert Laidlaw, Peel. From the Author.'

<sup>3</sup> *Dictys Cretensis*. Apud Lambertum Roulland. Lut. Paris., 1680. In red morocco, with the arms of Colbert.

<sup>4</sup> *L. Annaei Senecæ Opera Omnia*. Lug. Bat., apud Elzevirios. 1649. With book-plate of the Duke of Sussex.

<sup>5</sup> *Stratonis Epigrammata*. Altenburgi, 1764. Straton bound up in one volume with Epictetus! From the Beckford library.

<sup>6</sup> *Opera Helii Eobani Hessi*. Yellow morocco, with the first arms of De Thou. Include a poem addressed 'LANGE, decus meum.' Quantity of penultimate 'Eobanus' taken for granted, *metri gratiâ*.



They come, the wise, the great, the true,  
 They jostle on the narrow stair,  
 The frolic Countess de Verrue,  
 Lamoignon, ay, and Longepierre,  
 The new and elder dead are there—  
 The lords of speech, and song, and pen,  
 Gambetta,<sup>1</sup> Schlegel,<sup>2</sup> and the rare  
 Drummond of haunted Hawthornden.<sup>3</sup>

Ah, and with those, a hundred more,  
 Whose names, whose deeds, are quite forgot:  
 Brave 'Smiths' and 'Thompsons' by the score,  
 Scrawled upon many a shabby 'lot.'  
 This playbook was the joy of Pott<sup>4</sup>—  
 Pott, for whom now no mortal grieves.  
 Our names, like his, remembered not,  
 Like his, shall flutter on fly-leaves!

At least in pleasant company  
 We bookish ghosts, perchance, may flit;  
 A man may turn a page, and sigh,  
 Seeing one's name, to think of it.  
 Beauty, or Poet, Sage, or Wit,  
 May ope our book, and muse awhile,  
 And fall into a dreaming fit,  
 As now we dream, and wake, and smile!

\* \*

If ever a note may be made of a good old book revived, and brought within reach of men, Dr. Brinsley Nicholson's new edition of Reginald Scot's 'Discovery of Witchcraft'<sup>5</sup> deserves that note. The book is a portly small quarto, beautifully printed on excellent paper, and as there are only 250 copies, buyers should be ready with their brace of guineas. Writing in 1584, Reginald Scot dedicated his work to his kinsman, Sir Thomas Scot, knight,

<sup>1</sup> *La Journée du Chrétien*. Coutances, 1831. With inscription, 'Léon Gambetta. Rue St. Honoré. Janvier 1, 1848.'

<sup>2</sup> Villoison's *Homer*. Venice, 1788. With Tessier's ticket and Schlegel's book-plate.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Essais de Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne*. 'Pour François le Febvre de Lyon, 1695.' With autograph of Gul. Drummond, and *cipresso e palma*.

<sup>4</sup> 'The little old foxed Molière,' once the property of William Pott, unknown to fame.

<sup>5</sup> Elliot Stock.

'I being of your house, of your name, and of your bloud; my foot being under your table, my hand in your dish, or rather in your purse.' Scot saw 'manie poor old women convented before you for working of miracles,' and it is for these poor old women that he had the courage to speak, under that Christian Cetewayo, James I. The author no more believes in witchcraft than the author of that delightful essay in the *Spectator* about Sir Roger de Coverley and the Coverley witch. Scot notes the absurdity of the charges on which the old ladies were condemned and the ease with which ludicrous confessions were extorted. 'She said she would be even with me; and soon after my child, my son, my sow, and my pullet died, or was strangely taken.' 'Writers are not ashamed to say, that it is not absurd to affirme that there were no witches in Job's time.' The proof is that, if there *had* been witches, 'Job would have said he had beene bewitched.' Scot gives an example of a man who was burned for a wizard 'rather than lose his estimation': in fact, who went to the fire for conceit's sake. These are only the beginnings of the good Reginald's argument, and (except rural voters in some southern counties) we all agree with him. Where he is still invaluable is for his mass of learning, his stories of ghosts, were-wolves, warlocks, his myths, his great *hortus siccus*, gathered in a thousand queer nooks, of nightshade and the witch's belladonna. Here is matter for every curious reader, and I would as lief pass a month with Reginald Scot of the 'Discovery,' as with Burton of the 'Anatomy.' He has wisdom, wit, and such a stock of bogies as might keep the Psychical Society happy and in funds for a century. Moreover, this is a book that deserves to be bound gravely in brown morocco for the beauty of its type and paper.

ANDREW LANG.

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### *The 'Donna.'*

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge the following subscriptions:—D. J. R. 10s. K. M. C. 5s. H. A. B. 2s. 6d. Miss Mavrogordato 5s.

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